Commentary

Volume Fifty-five, Number One, January 1973

THE ELECTION & THE NATIONAL MOOD

Seymour Martin Lipset
and Earl Raab

Defaming the Jews/Robert Alter

Lords of the Press/Rudolf Klein

The Cold War According to Kennan/Adam B. Ulam

Money, the Job, and Little Women/Ellen Moers

Dayan as Politician/Hillel Halkin

Movie Chronicle/William S. Pechter

What the Voters Sensed/Norman Podhoretz

Books in Review: James Q. Wilson/John Hollander/
Robert Conquest/Alan Goldfein/David Stern

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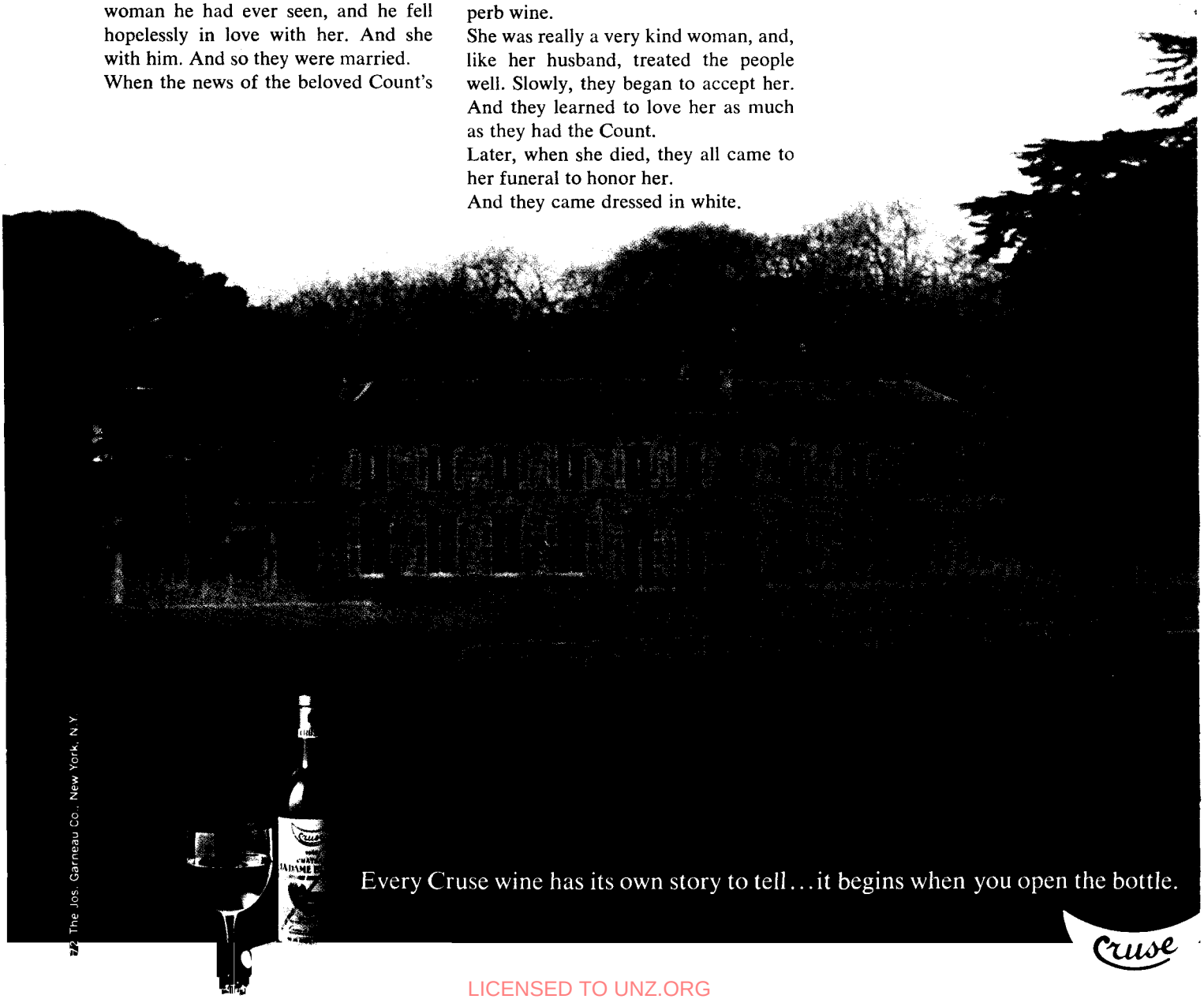

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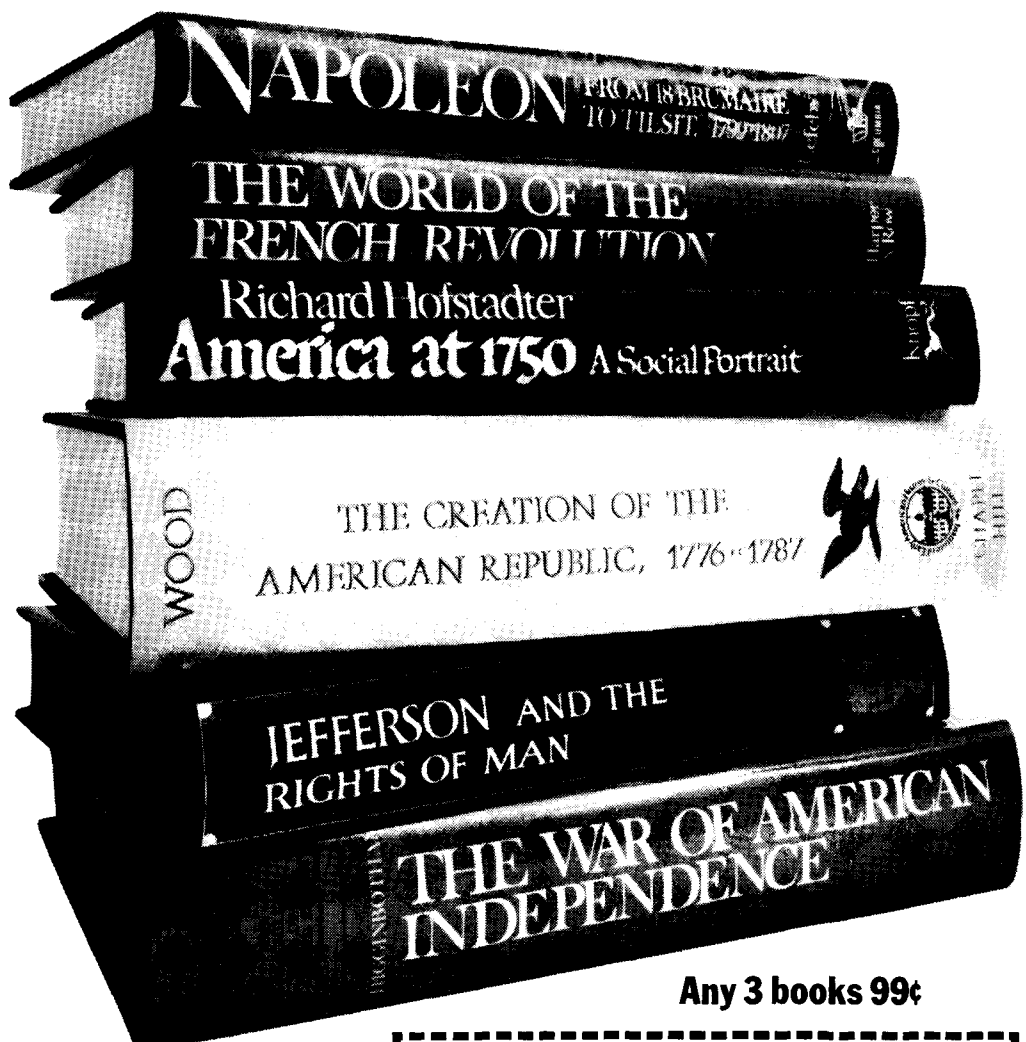
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Commentary

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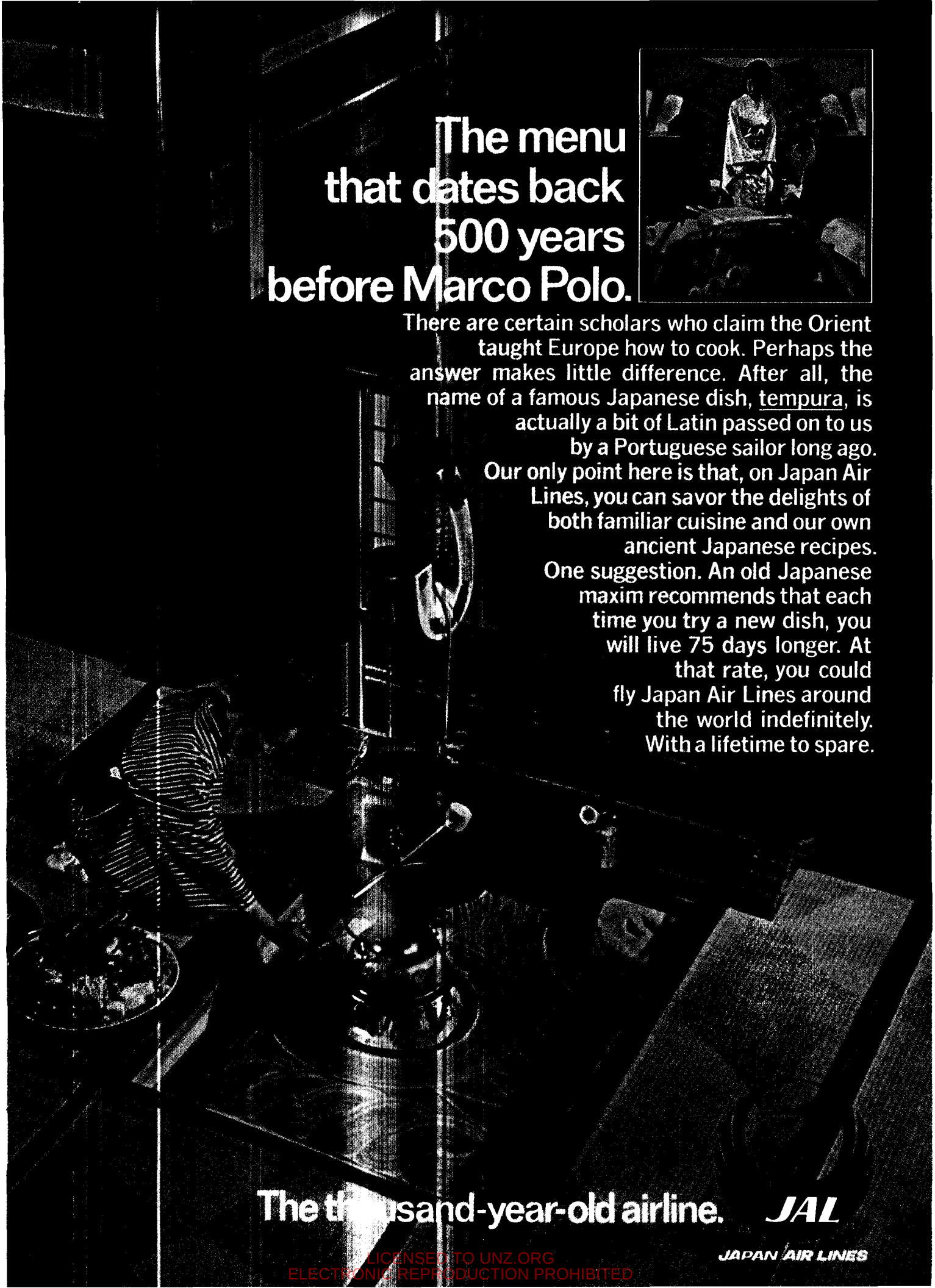

The menu that dates back 500 years before Marco Polo.

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Issues

What the Voters Sensed

Norman Podhoretz

AMONG the more puzzling questions arising from an analysis of the election returns like the one by Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab (p. 43) is how the ideologues of the McGovern movement could have been so wrong in all their political judgments. They said that McGovern would do well with traditionally Democratic groups, and yet he did badly with every one of them. Of the blue-collar vote he carried only half, and of the ethnic groups he lost the Italians and the Irish while holding onto the Jews and the blacks by significantly smaller percentages than Humphrey had won in 1968. They said that the Wallace vote would go to McGovern, and yet Nixon carried it by two to one. They said that McGovern would carry two-thirds of the youth vote, and yet he barely carried half. They said that McGovern was forging a new coalition as broad as Roosevelt's in 1932, and yet the only new coalition he succeeded in forging was as narrow as Goldwater's in 1964 and the only broad coalition he succeeded in forging was a broad coalition for Nixon. They said that Nixon's twenty-point lead over McGovern at the start would be overcome as the people got to know McGovern better, and yet nothing McGovern did, nor anything Nixon did, made the slightest difference to the final result. Despite $1,000 and 1,000 per cent on the one side and Watergate and wheat deals on the other; despite speeches against Thieu on the one side and the announcement that peace was at hand on the other, McGovern trailed by the same twenty points in November as he had trailed by in July.

The McGovern ideologues said, in short, that McGovern would win and might even win big, and yet to no one's surprise but their own he lost, and by one of the greatest landslides in all of American history. How could highly intelligent men like the McGovern ideologues—men, moreover, experienced in the ways of politics—have been so mistaken in their reading of the country's mood?

ONE reason, surely, was the parochialism of the McGovern ideologues, and particularly the professors among them. Few of them had any first-hand knowledge of the kind of people who once made up the numerical base of Democratic electoral strength—the blue-collar workers and the (mainly Catholic) ethnic groups. And even of the "newer" groups who were supposed to be joining and broadening the McGovern coalition, they knew only a small and politically unrepresentative minority. When, for example, they spoke of the "young," they were not actually thinking of all persons between the ages of 18 and 24; it was only their own children and their own students they had in mind. To the students at Western Illinois or the University of Alabama, let alone to working-class youth, they simply paid no attention in their confident calculations of how the "young" would vote. And so too when they spoke of "women," it was not Catholic women or ordinary housewives they meant, but only the politically untypical women they themselves had taught or worked with or married.

Knowing at first hand so small a sample of people gave the McGovern ideologues a wildly distorted notion of what the national mood was like in 1972. Last summer Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. described the "disquietudes of the nation" as follows: "The disgust with the way things have been recently managed in this country, the recoil against the Establishment, the pessimism about the national future, the desire for unspecified but recognizable change, the demand for everyday decency

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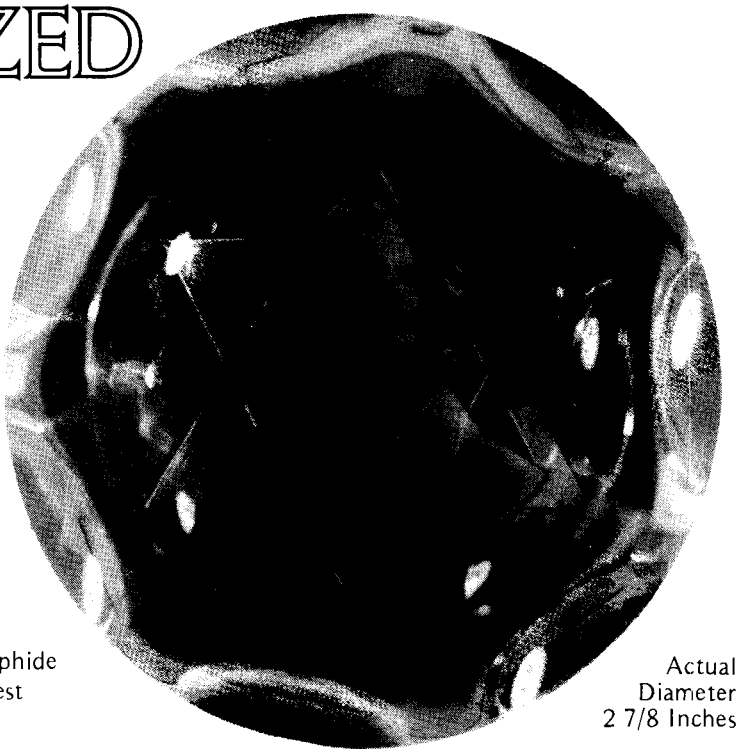

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in politics and for candor and concern in the White House—these things infect every bloc in the nation, including the Establishment itself." Schlesinger would have been closer to the truth if he had said *especially* the Establishment itself, and especially that part of it dominated by his own political friends. For the actual disquietudes of the nation in 1972 were only vaguely related to considerations such as the ones he listed, if in fact they were related to such considerations at all.

Disgust there certainly was in the American air in 1972, but what anyone with any sense of the country would have known was that for the great majority of Americans, including many liberals, this disgust was directed, first of all, at the cultural revolution of the 60's. It was a disgust, as Elizabeth Hardwick described it with comprehensiveness and precision shortly before the election, "for show-off students, for runaways, for attacks on the family and the system, for obscenity, for pot, for prisoner-pity, for dropping out, for tuning in, for radical chic, for storefront lawyers, for folk singers, for muggings, for addicts, for well-do-to Wasps grogged on charity binges." Matching this upsurge of cultural disgust was a wave of political disgust directed against the bureaucrats, the lawyers, and the judges who in the name of what they considered racial justice were taking it upon themselves to order the busing of children from one school to another, the building of public-housing projects in middle-class neighborhoods, and the institution of job quotas for accredited "minorities." And swelling this wave of domestic political disgust, finally, was a similar passion directed against all the politicians and editorialists who persisted in branding American participation in the Vietnam war a crime, in comparing Johnson and then Nixon to Hitler and the American people themselves to "good Germans" or even, as the *New Yorker* once did, to "monsters," and who all but openly prayed for an outcome that would spell humiliation and defeat for the United States.

To the extent that the McGovern ideologues recognized the existence of this mood and its pervasiveness, they either dismissed it as irrational—a "distraction," in Anthony Lewis's term, from the "real" problems the people *should* be caring about and about which McGovern would soon instruct them—or they castigated it as a species of "aimless rancor" (Schlesinger's phrase) or even (in the words of Gary Hart) as a symptom of "moral bankruptcy and collapse" which would soon be dispelled by the "reasoned discourse and rational hope" (Schlesinger) McGovern was about to offer and the "challenging, uplifting, and highly moral things" (Hart) McGovern was about to say. In either case they refused to take the popular mood seriously, preferring instead to believe that the people had been manipulated into feeling the way they did by demagogic appeals to what McGovern himself called their "anxieties and fears"—as though the overwhelming tide of opposition to busing, for example, had been provoked by Nixon and Wallace and not by orders of the federal courts in San Francisco, Denver, and Richmond; or as though there were nothing "reasoned" in a position which rejected both racial discrimination and governmentally coerced proportional representation, whether in schools, in housing, or in jobs; or as though there were nothing "rational" in a position which wanted the war to end but did not want the country subjected to any further abuse.

In my opinion, this refusal to take the popular will seriously and to treat it with respect was a symptom of the contempt the McGovern ideologues felt for the majority of the American people, for their sensibilities, for their political values, for their sense of themselves as a nation. Like their own students and their own children who were "giving the system one more chance" before abandoning it as hopeless, the McGovern ideologues were giving the American people one more chance to prove that they were ready to be ruled by the views of their intellectual and moral betters before being written off once again as selfish, materialistic, complacent, boorish, brutal. And so indeed they were written off by the McGovern ideologues when the election results were in. Said one syndicated columnist: "The people, as always, voted their fears, their pitiful hopes, and their meanest prejudices." Several other commentators interpreted the Nixon landslide as nothing more than an expression of the anti-black sentiments of the masses of whites. And Michael Harrington attributed the landslide to "a reactionary, utterly erroneous myth about the United States" which "coincided with the false consciousness of a majority of the people."

Yet even before the election Schlesinger wrote: "President Nixon sees Americans as basically contented; trustful of authority . . . ; fearful of change; resentful of liberals, of the young, of those pushy nonwhite minorities; dedicated to law and order, ancestral pieties, and the status quo. If this diagnosis is correct, Nixon will win." In fact, however, the diagnosis was incorrect and Nixon still won. For what Nixon saw about the American people was that they had reached the limit of their tolerance for just such contemptuously formulated assertions concerning them as Schlesinger was attributing to him: and what Nixon also saw was that the American people knew very well from which political quarters these sneering ideas mainly derived. (He himself, to be sure, was capable of comparing the "ordinary American" to a child, but this egregious remark was only published after the election and did not in any event resonate with the tone of a campaign which exhibited something close to perfect pitch in its ear for the national mood.)

THE McGovern ideologues, then, were as wrong as they were in their forecasts in 1972 because they were patronizing, unsympathetic, and finally hostile to the feelings and beliefs of the majority of the American people. And this in itself, clearly sensed by the voters from the very start of the campaign, may well have been the reason that nothing McGovern said or did could cut into Nixon's lead and may well have been the most important factor in the size of McGovern's defeat. ■

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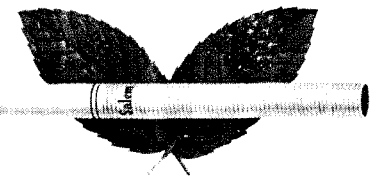

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Letters from Readers

On Autism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I appreciate the intelligence and compassion with which Sonya Rudikoff treats my book, *A Child Called Noah*, in her essay, "Why Some Children Don't Speak" [October 1972]. But I think she goes completely astray in her discussion of whether society has any responsibility after all to help such children as my autistic son. At issue here is neither a complicated question of a social responsibility growing out of a chain of causation nor the theoretical effect of usurpation of parental decision that arises with any governmental intervention, as she would have it. Rather, it is simply a question of civil rights. The statutes and laws that mandate public education do not contain restrictive convenants limiting their application and enforcement to "normal children" only. A child such as my son, no matter what diagnostic ghetto he may be assigned to, is entitled to a public education. Yet ironically children who by their very nature require more of an educational effort are expected by "society" to settle for less.

Indeed, the question of social responsibility that concerns me at the moment is an entirely different one from the one Miss Rudikoff raises: I am currently in the process of moving from my home in northern Westchester because my son is not being offered an educational program of more than three hours per day—a direct and flagrant violation of New York state law. And I've been wondering more and more about the ethics and efficacy of my moving away instead of staying and fighting an unjust status quo—just as I know my grandfather wondered, when, as a member of a discriminated-against minority group, he decided to flee Czarist Russia.

JOSH GREENFELD
Croton-on-Hudson, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Our son is a carbon copy of "a child called Noah." But in our case it is a blessing that we are not affluent, educated, and sophisticated like the Greenfelds. At the outset we decided that we would never allow him to be placed in an institution; we would raise him just like other children. We did not panic when the experts at Johns Hopkins told us that he was a vegetable. Instead of dumping him on the mercy of the District of Columbia, we refused to admit that he was a bother, notwithstanding our sleepless nights. We had to keep his fingernails cut down to the skin to prevent him from ripping himself apart. As he grew, he would dash about making weird sounds like a caged wild animal while he clapped his hands continuously. He was afraid to walk on grass. The world outside the house panicked him, but I carried him everyplace I went.

When he was around twelve the tide began to change. Now he is a sweet, gentle, and beautiful young man. He has learned to restrain himself. The only personal attention he requires is what is given to so-called normal six-to-ten-year-olds. Since he understands language so well, I am hopeful that someday he will learn to talk. He understands his handicap, and he appreciates what has to be done for him. . . .

HORACE C. CASE
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . One major cause of autism is the sustained, yet often unrecognized, anxiety experienced daily by significant persons in the child's environment; this extremely high anxiety is communicated to and experienced by the child. . . . Autism is in part a response to the terror which the child experiences at a time when his conceptual tools are inadequate to . . . express the difficulty. Early signs of autism (often overlooked) are signals of distress within the family system including high levels of anxiety. All of the published accounts cited by Sonya Rudikoff give ample evidence to support this inference.

Conditioning techniques require parents and the autistic child to focus their attention on simple, concrete, minute tasks. They work because this focus fits neatly with the observable effects which anxiety produces, namely, the narrowing of the perceptual field and the focus upon detail. . . . The conditioning tasks "start where the learner is" (a principle of education); a relevant detail is provided as the focus of attention, and since

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its scope fits with the narrowed perceptual field . . . it becomes possible for the child . . . to accomplish something and to reduce his anxiety. . . .

The families of autistic children should try family therapy, with each member looking at the family as a *system* that has patterns and strategies . . . which perpetuate the anxiety-laden environment to which the autistic child accommodates in his desperate attempt to survive. . . .

HILDEGARD E. PEPLAU
Graduate Program in
Advanced Psychiatric Nursing
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am a senior in high school, and until I read Sonya Rudikoff's article I had always found autistic or mentally-ill children repellent. But the article showed that such children, when treated properly, can at times achieve normal behavior. I hope that others who feel as I did will read the article. . . .

LINDA HEINTSKILL
Bay City, Michigan

SONYA RUDIKOFF writes:

I am glad that Linda Heintskill was moved to reconsider her impressions of autistic and mentally-ill children. Descriptions do tend to underline the weird, unbelievable, repellent features of their behavior. Obviously, much more can be said. Anyone who has lived or worked with such children knows also of their sweetness, their affectionate natures, their resourcefulness. Indeed, it is the harassed parents, such as Horace C. Case, who so often discern gentleness, intelligence, acuity of perception, memory feats, strong feeling. How often are such traits observed in institutions? Mr. Case, like many parents, almost feels he would never have known of them if his child had not been cared for in the family. Those parents who are willing to undergo sleepless nights and severe burdens, because they care so much, are also the ones who will be most grateful for the sweetness, gentleness, and beauty the child reveals: it seems to make their work worthwhile.

Probably any family with an autistic child examines itself as a system, and thus engages in a kind of family therapy, if only because in order to cope with the difficulties occasioned by the child's illness, the entire family must organize itself to explore its own purposes and patterns. Clearly there is a psychology of the family of the autistic child, just as there is an individual psychology of the mother of the autistic child, the father, the siblings, the grandparents. Those close to the child can be helped by individual therapy, and probably the family can be helped by family therapy as currently practiced. It is an important part of the theories of family therapy that the afflicted one is not ill uniquely, in isolation, but that, rather, the illness is a signal of the entire family's distress; the most vulnerable one betrays visible symptoms, but other members of the family may be actually just as ill, if not more so.

It sems to me, though, that Dr. Hildegard E. Peplau reveals the great difficulty and impracticality of this therapy for autistic children when she speaks of "each member looking at the family." The autistic child cannot "look at the family" as others do, he is not in a position to share with others even a simple language of agreed-upon terms and meanings, or to isolate an experience in order to examine it, not to speak of being able to modify and modulate his own behavior in order to engage in the shared tasks of family therapy. The rest of the family may go each week to the therapist and explore intensively their complex interaction of the previous week, but the autistic child doesn't join in this enterprise. His inability to participate even minimally raises a question about this therapy's usefulness for autism. And, in the meantime, while the family concentrates its energies on exploring itself as a system, the child isn't learning anything.

The National Society for Autistic Children has been extremely energetic in pressing for the inclusion of autistic and handicapped children in educational programs throughout the country. In state legislatures, state and federal offices, and local agencies, the Society and its supporters have done so much to make educational facilities available to children with special needs, and so much else that needs to be done, that I do not want to say anything which would seem to ignore

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or dispute these needs and rights. As Josh Greenfeld observes, these children are often deprived of what is due them; if they do not adapt easily to the education society offers all its children, they may find, in many parts of the country, that nothing else has been devised for their special requirements, and they are thus effectively deprived of their right to a public education. Thanks to NSAC, many parents have been able to learn more about what their children are entitled to expect.

I assume that those who are thinking about autistic children, the parents, and their representatives in NSAC, are looking beyond the immediate question of assuring each child his right to an appropriate education, and are examining the teachers' colleges, the training programs in special education, and the dissemination of educational ideas. What are the ideas used now in the teaching of these special children? What ideas are being introduced into the training programs for future application? It would be a hollow victory indeed if the rights of handicapped children to special education were secured and then that education proved wrong.

Niebuhr and Ethnicity

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a student of American culture and personality, and of the history of ethnic groups in American life, I am extremely impressed by the astuteness and sensitivity of Michael Novak's observations on the nature of American national character ["Needing Niebuhr Judaized Herbert Gold or the newly black LeRoi Jones. Nothing too good can be said of the newly invented past. . . . Having reconstituted a culture for himself, Mr. Novak now formulates and discovers a theology and a polity: the former, a *Weltanschauung* to justify the particulars; the latter, a guide to action based on the new ideology. Hence Reinhold Niebuhr, theologian and social philosopher. Is it mere coincidence that the vicissitudes and choices of Niebuhr's life are largely replicated by those of his disciple, Michael Novak? One could readily read Mr. Novak's present essay and substitute his name for Niebuhr's.

I have followed Mr. Novak's writings from the early days of radical politics of the 1960's through his disillusion with the American Dream and his emergence as eloquent spokesman for ethnicity. He ends his own essay with a quote from Niebuhr that is surely the moral of his story: "'. . . To such faith the generations are bound to return after they have pursued the mirages in the desert to which they are tempted from time to time by the illusions of particular eras.'" Significantly, to Niebuhr in his last years "such faith" was far closer to traditional Judaism and Catholicism than to Protestantism; surely such resonance with Niebuhr is not unrelated to Mr. Novak's return to the dark and mystical warmth and security of Catholic tradition, over against Protestant individualism and aridity. . . . Mr. Novak's final solution is a pragmatic, naive separatism. "In domestic politics, of these depths that Mr. Novak so hauntingly writes. . . .

HOWARD F. STEIN
Meharry Medical College
Nashville, Tennessee

MICHAEL NOVAK writes:

It is fascinating to read about oneself, as understood from afar, especially since Howard F. Stein is so plainly well-intentioned.

There are, properly, quite a few "ifs" in his analysis. Alter one, or two, or three of them, and the tower of cards collapses.

1) I have *not* abandoned the notion of a "common culture." But one of the best ways to strengthen the common culture is to see with full clarity the exact location of interests and powers within it. It is good for each group to be generous, forgiving, compassionate, disinclined to quibble, willing to go the extra mile. But it is in everybody's common interest that such generosity be done in full and exact consciousness, against which there is no later appeal.

2) I do not believe that a Hobbesian battle between interests and powers is either a good description of the American past or a good prescription for the American future.

3) From 1963 to 1965, I probably read more of Reinhold Niebuhr's writings—including every magazine article available at Harvard and Union libraries—than anyone alive. I intended then to write a book about him. That interest is not recent.

4) I did not write *The Rise of*

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Aesthetics and Politics

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After approving my view that aesthetics and politics are "separate realms of existence," Norman Podhoretz proceeds rather thoroughly to confound them ["Intellectuals at War," October 1972]. His argument is that the new sensibility and the counter-culture (imprecise and poor terms, but let them do for the moment), along with their derivatives in the contemporary arts, belong not to the history of art but to the "history of publicity and beyond that to the history of politics and more specifically to the history of radical politics. As such they have always exerted their claim to sympathetic attention less on aesthetic than on political grounds, celebrating themselves and being celebrated as weapons in the revolution against American society and not as the matrix of vital and lasting works of art." Mr. Podhoretz's plea for a new form of peaceful coexistence between art and middle-class society does not appear to rest on the view that this society offers aesthetic possibilities hitherto unrealized, or ignored. It rests, rather, on the view that political revolution (such as it was and is) against it is unjustified. A defensible position, certainly—but not one which enables us to understand why avant-garde posturing recently became a standard feature of every suburban cocktail party.

Aesthetics and politics are separate, but they are not entirely unrelated. Surely, Mr. Podhoretz would not dismiss *Mr. Sammler's Planet* or *Rabbit Redux* as unworthy of aesthetic consideration because they deal, among other matters, with recent political themes. And Mr. Podhoretz did publish an excerpt from Lionel Trilling's new book, *Sincerity and Authenticity* ["Authenticity and the Modern Unconscious," September 1971], which is a large exploration of the connection among aesthetic experience, the common life, and individual self-definition. Suppose we take a somewhat different approach. Mr. Podhoretz praises the essay, "The Rise and Fall of the Avant-Garde," by Hilton Kramer [October 1972]. If I have understood Mr. Kramer correctly, he gives ample evidence that the history of art and the history of publicity have—to a distressing extent—merged. Why? This is not the place to recapitulate the cultural history of the West since the Industrial Revolution, and I cannot claim originality in asserting that there is a connection among the internal development of political-economic society, the forms of sensibility, and the organization of artistic production. Politics and aesthetics are different, but politics does impinge upon, even limit, the conditions of aesthetic experience. The inanities and vulgarities of the counter-culture, its caricature of aesthetic modernism, represent a packaging in commodity form of the experience of the avant-garde. Can we live in peace with a society which sells everything, including the search for the limits of experience? I am aware that there are buyers as well as sellers. What are we to say about a society in which the transformation of art into life is thought of as a right, rather like paid vacations? There is no point in mocking, yet once more, the limitless expectations of history's spoiled children, the educated American middle class. It is more to the point to ask what in their daily lives is so unsatisfactory, so discontinuous with the cultural tradition we have taught them (ever so badly and dimly, I know) in college. It is absurd to suppose that the middle-class society which produced the counter-culture is one with which we ought to make a pact. A critical view of that society, or critical distance from it—embodied in the work of the imagination—is a precondition of aesthetic and intellectual authenticity. It does not follow, of course, that art has to become political propaganda. It does follow that artists and intellectuals have not alone the right but the duty to scrutinize the experience offered us by our institutions. My own objection to the counter-culture (quite apart from the fact that it represents the plebeianization of bohemia) is that it is a poor substitute for a genuine politics, as well as a genuine art. We do have to be careful: a reasonable skepticism in aesthetics about art that is (in the inimitable tribal phase) "with it," ought not to blind us to the necessity for painful as well as painstaking experimentation in the arts, and in thought as well. Mr. Podhoretz is wrong, in any event, in supposing that the problem of the relationship between art and politics can be dealt with so summarily.

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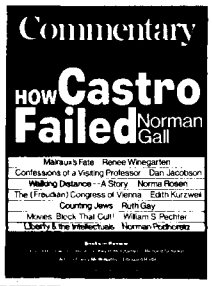

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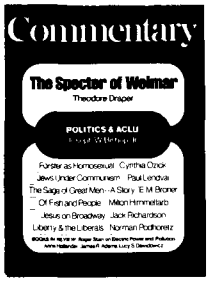

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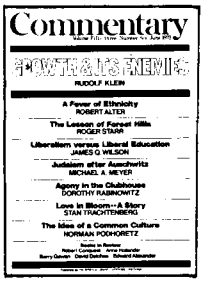

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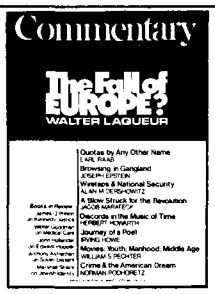

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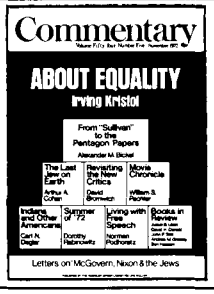

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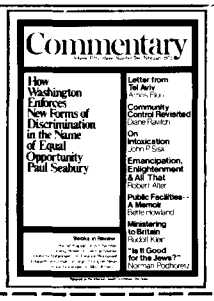

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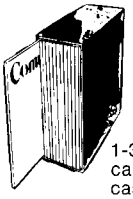

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NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

Norman Birnbaum dislikes the counter-culture and the new sensibility as much as I do, and he laments the failure of the colleges to give their students a proper sense of the "cultural tradition." He is being much too modest, for the truth is that the colleges have been extraordinarily successful in imbuing their students with the attitudes of at least one cultural tradition—that of the avant-garde, and particularly its hatred of bourgeois society. This hatred is the driving force behind both the new sensibility and the counter-culture (as it of course also is of the New Left and to some extent even of the New Politics). In blaming the "inanities and vulgarities" of all these interrelated phenomena on bourgeois society itself, Mr. Birnbaum merely finds yet another justification for hating that society. But if we are to damn bourgeois society for producing the counter-culture, are we to praise it for producing Karl Marx? In any case, why *not* "make a pact with it"? (I speak, of course, of a spiritual pact, the social contract having long been signed by most American intellectuals, and to judge by the way all of us live, on very good terms too.) Why, moreover, is "peaceful coexistence" a good slogan in talking about the relations among nations and a bad one in talking about the relations among classes and groups? And why, finally, is Mr. Birnbaum so sure that this society does not offer "aesthetic possibilities hitherto unrealized, or ignored"? I have no quarrel with his assertion that "critical distance . . . is a precondition of aesthetic and intellectual authenticity." Of course it is. Yet for a long time now we have had nothing but the critical perspective, with what results in art and thought we see all around us—in the new sensibility, in the counter-culture, and in the pap that passes for social criticism. Who can tell what might now come of a disposition to look at contemporary life with eyes directed for a change by some emotion more complicated than spite or more interesting than contempt?

The Pentagon Papers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As one of the judges who gave the New York *Times* the Page One award of the New York Newspaper Guild for its publication of the Pentagon papers, I must take issue with Joseph Bishop, Jr.'s review of

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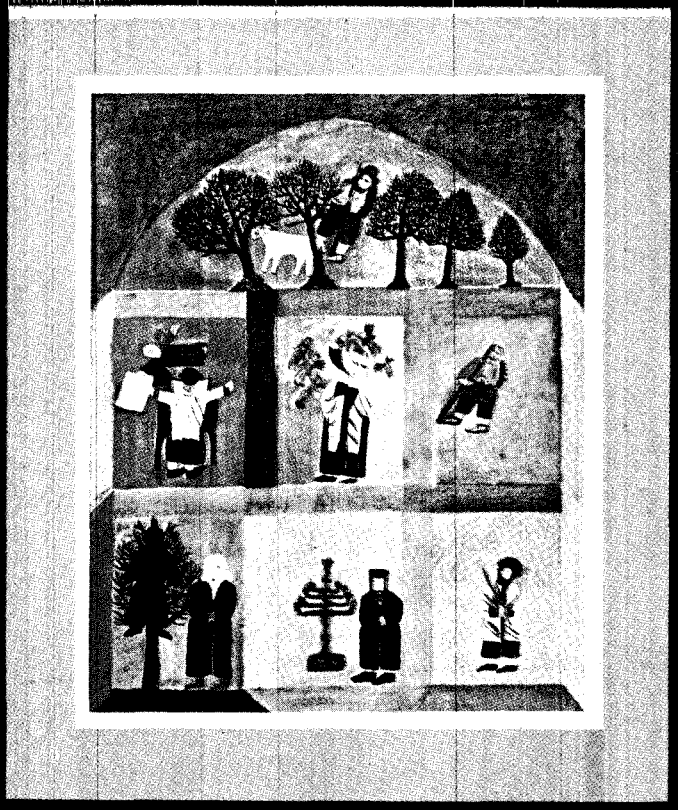

THE HOLIDAYS

Harry Lieberman

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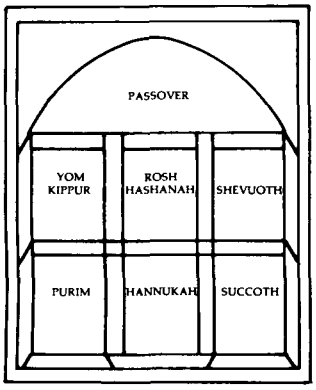

THE HOLIDAYS is typical of Harry Lieberman's joyous treatment of religious themes as he charmingly crowds a lifetime into a single picture, vibrant with color. Naive yet sophisticated, the overall effect can be likened to a Hasidic combination of biblical literalness and inspired symbolism. A faint nostalgia for the teachings of childhood and its lost innocence permeates the entire group despite its paradoxical appearance of stained glass panels in a wood frame.

Harry Lieberman's own life is as fascinating as his paintings, which win high critical praise wherever they are shown. Although he started his painting career late (at the age of 78) and as a primitive, there is nothing amateurish about his work. In fact, the richness of the color and detail in his interpretations of Biblical themes imbue them with great vitality and warmth.

Born in a typical *shtetl*, Gnieveshev, pop. 500, near Warsaw, nephew of the village Rabbi, Harry Lieberman followed the Hasidic Sect of Mystic Ecstasy founded by the Baal-Shem-Tov. He came to this country in 1906 and worked at first as a clothing cutter on the lower East Side of New York. The confectionary business beckoned next, and the one he and his wife started grew and prospered until he retired to Great Neck, New York, in 1950. There his primary interest was chess but, when his chess partner fell ill—Harry Lieberman turned to painting.

Now in his nineties, he is still exhibiting his work in both one-man and group exhibitions; and it is collected both here and abroad by museums, individuals, and institutions.

"Lieberman turns an intense and innocent eye on the Bible and Talmud, and the results are better than the usual product of the Grandma Moses school . . . his paintings are unimpeded pleasures." —*The New York Times*

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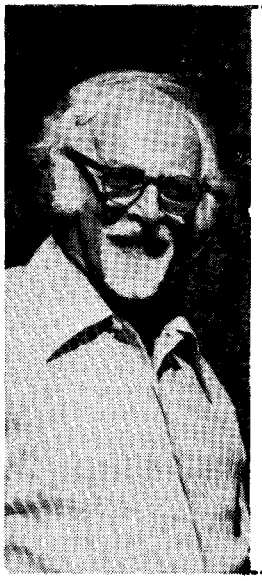

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The Paper & the Papers by Sanford J. Ungar [Books in Review, September 1972].

Mr. Bishop holds that the publication did *not* contribute very much to public enlightenment. His error is mystifying. It was not merely desirable but necessary to inform the public that nowhere in the papers does the proposal emerge to submit to Congress the planning of war in Vietnam. The writers of the papers were arrogating to themselves the authority vested by the Constitution solely in Congress. The papers were kept secret not only from the public but from Congress as well. If there was no outright conspiracy, there was at least a tacit understanding that Congress, had it been informed, would have disapproved of the war. It is most definitely enlightenment for the public to know that the secrecy in this case bordered on the neo-fascist.

While a President clearly must have war emergency powers, an emergency does not continue into all eternity. The writers of those papers must share in the blame, along with the Presidents under whom they served, for the fearful cost in lives and treasure. They must share as well in the blame for the deplorable position we shall face in the eyes of future historians. The most powerful, the richest army on earth was unable in more than a decade of fighting to defeat the smallest, weakest army. . . .

Mr. Bishop devotes considerable space to quotations from persons exposing the shortcomings of the press. As an old and even ancient reporter, now retired, I do concede the press has faults. It always did. Nevertheless, despite the faults even then apparent, the Founding Fathers, who constituted the most brilliant, the most clear-eyed, the most far-sighted group of men ever assembled to found a new nation, recognized the vital importance of a free press to a free country, and wrote the protection of that freedom into the basic law of the land.

For the *Times* award, the citation I wrote noted that theirs was "the most distinguished newspaper crusade in American history." It was, for the reason that over the opposition of the Attorney General and other high officials, the crusade led to a reaffirmation by the United States Supreme Court of the freedom of the press. We may all be proud of our Supreme Court.

CHARLES ROLAND

New York City

JOSEPH W. BISHOP, JR. writes:

I, in my turn, find myself somewhat mystified by Charles Roland's letter. I quoted in my review just two short observations on the press, one by George Orwell and the other by John F. Kennedy. Neither "exposed the shortcomings" of the press or was in the least critical of it. As for the comment in his second paragraph, I knew, and would have supposed that the rest of the public knew, the extent of Congress's participation or lack of participation in the conduct of military operations in Vietnam, long before the Pentagon Papers were published. Senator Fulbright never kept his views secret. If Mr. Roland didn't know—well, perhaps that explains his vote.

I infer that Mr. Roland did not read my review very carefully, and I suspect that neither did he read the ten opinions of the Supreme Court very carefully, if he read them at all. His letter exemplifies what I believe is the trouble with many American reporters—not so much bias as a disposition to prefer rhetoric over research, think stories over fact stories.

"The Pottinger Papers" (Cont'd)

Professor Thomas Sowell of UCLA, currently on leave at The Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., has given us permission to publish his letter to Professor Frank C. Pierson of Swarthmore College as part of our continuing discussion of affirmative action in the universities ["HEW & the Universities," by Paul Seabury, February 1972; Letters from Readers, May, June, July, and December 1972].—ED.

September 18, 1972

Professor Frank C. Pierson
Chairman,
Department of Economics
Swarthmore College
Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

Dear Professor Pierson:

This morning I was pleased to receive a letter from Swarthmore College, an institution for which I have long had respect, and reports from which have added to my admiration. Then I opened the letter and learned that "Swarthmore College is actively looking for a black economist. . . ." and the phrase that came immediately to mind was one from a bygone era, when a very different kind of emotionalism was abroad, and a counsel facing Senator Joseph McCarthy said, "Sir, have you no shame?"

What *purpose* is to be served by this sort of thing? Surely a labor economist of your reputation must know that unemployment among black Ph.D.'s is one of the least of our social problems, and has been for many years—long before "affirmative action." In general, even, the salary is no higher at a top college than at less prestigious institutions for a given individual. So you are doing very little for black faculty members with broadcast recruiting campaigns like this (I note the letter is mimeographed). Maybe you think you are doing something for race relations. If you are going to find a Swarthmore-quality black faculty member, that is one thing. But Swarthmore-quality faculty members are found through Swarthmore-quality channels and not through mimeographed letters of this sort. Many a self-respecting black scholar would never accept an offer like this, even if he might otherwise enjoy teaching at Swarthmore. When Bill Allen was department chairman at UCLA he violently refused to hire anyone on the basis of ethnic representation—and thereby made it possible for me to come there a year later with my head held up. Your approach tends to make the job unattractive to anyone who regards himself as a scholar or a man, and thereby throws it open to opportunists.

Despite all the brave talk in academia about "affirmative action" without lowering quality standards, you and I both know that it takes many years to create a qualified faculty member of any color, and no increased demand is going to increase the supply immediately *unless* you lower quality. Now what good is going to come from lower standards that will make "black" equivalent to "substandard' in the eyes of black and white students alike? Can you imagine that this is going to *reduce* racism? On the contrary, more and more thoughtful people are beginning to worry that the next generation will see an increasing amount of bigotry among those whites educated at some of the most liberal institutions, where this is the picture that is presented to them, however noble the rhetoric that accompanies it.

You and I both know that many of these "special" recruiting efforts are not aimed at helping black faculty members or black or white

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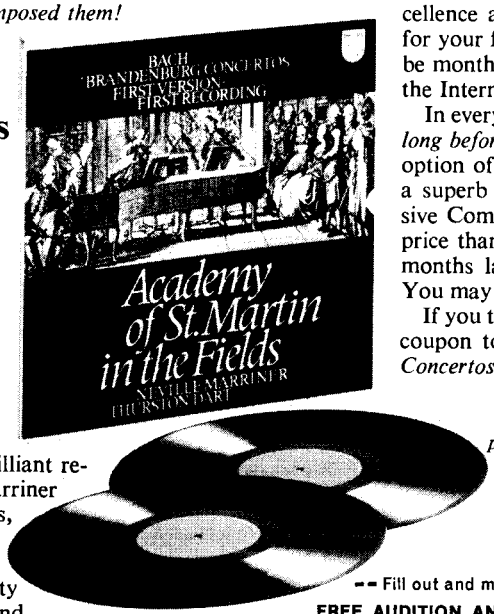

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students, but rather at hanging on to the school's federal money. Now, I have nothing against money. I have not been so familiar with it as to have contempt for it. But there are limits to what should be done to get it, and particularly so for an institution with a proud tradition, at a time when the government itself is wavering and having second thoughts about this policy, and when just a little courage from a few men in "responsible" positions might make a difference.

Yours sincerely,
[signed] Thomas Sowell

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Those of us who, like Elliott Abrams ["The Quota Commission," October 1972] and Paul Seabury, have voiced fears of artificially imposed proportional representation in employment or education, whether it may result from outright quotas or numerical goals, are sometimes made to feel a bit like people years ago who saw bomb-carrying bearded Bolsheviks under every bed. After all, it is being said, aren't we at least exaggerating the perils? In this connection, a recent Consent Decree approved by a U.S. District Court in California in disposing of a job discrimination suit is of interest.

In the case of *NAACP* v. *Imperial Irrigation District*, the Consent Decree entered on September 8 and agreed to by the parties, without any adjudication on the merits and without any admission of discrimination by the defendants, reads in part as follows:

> Defendants shall take all action necessary to insure that as soon as possible the proportion of Chicanos and Blacks in the IID work force generally, and in each job classification (including supervisory and management positions), shall equal the proportion of Chicanos and Blacks in the general population of Imperial County, as shown by the latest United States Bureau of the Census figures. Similarly, *defendants shall take all the actions necessary to insure that as soon as possible the proportion of all other racial and ethnic groups employed at the IID shall be equal to their proportion in the general population of Imperial County,* as shown by the latest United States Bureau of the Census figures. The attainment of these hiring levels shall hereinafter be referred to as the "Affirmative Action Goal." (emphasis added)

The target date for achieving the overall Affirmative Action Goal (perhaps very fittingly) is January 1, 1984.

SAMUEL RABINOVE
New York City

Schooling in America

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to thank Diane Ravitch for her clear and sympathetic treatment of the school-debunking evidence I present in my book, *The Great School Legend: A Revisionist Interpretation of American Public Education* [Books in Review, October 1972], but I would also like to clarify certain points which I believe she has misinterpreted.

First, rather than ignoring what she calls the "disabling culture" of some immigrant groups, my point in the book is precisely that the schools actually reflected and reinforced propensities—enabling and disabling—determined elsewhere. School was a positive encounter for some groups and a negative one for others; and, as we are only recently discovering, for some parts of some supposedly successful groups, the experience was negative too.

Secondly, while I discuss the lack of positive school effect as measured by school pretensions about achievement and mobility, my position is different from the Coleman Report (and the new Christopher Jencks-Harvard University study of schools, for that matter) in that I see public education as a reflecting and reinforcing agent . . . actively "mirroring" (to use the word Mrs. Ravitch uses) society by translating existing social realities into the categories of performance by which the system legitimates its rewards and deprivations. I do not see schools as irrelevant or impotent at all. In this perspective, poor academic performance at such urban high schools as New York City's Benjamin Franklin, for example, is as important a part of successful public-school functioning as is academic achievement at, let us say, the Bronx High School of Science. Charges of school failure, impotence, and/or irrelevance make sense only if one assumes—erroneously as I see it—the integrity of public-school rhetoric about mobility as a primary school goal.

Finally, my concluding remarks with respect to teachers doing things differently in schools: these remarks were intended as a highly personal reflection by one who, like so many other teachers, continues to teach in public education. Indeed, in that concluding chapter I tried to make clear my view of public-school subservience to the socioeconomic system. The feeling

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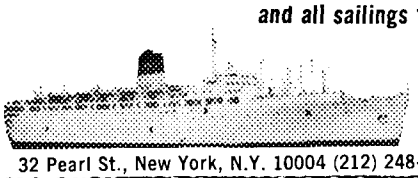

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expressed in the last part of the concluding chapter, while it lacks the rigor I sought—not always successfully, unfortunately—in the body of the book, is a groping for hope, a personal statement about the way in which actual lives can never be so clear-cut as social analyses. Despite what I consider to be the negative historical momentum of public schooling, many people with a vision of a less exploitative version of society do work in schools—trying, at least, to rewrite the intra-institutional script rather than living by the existing one. . . .

I spoke of tension in the schools as a potential movement toward the creation of a "vehicle" for radical social change; not, by any means, the vehicle itself. I, like Mrs. Ravitch, deeply regret that I can offer no reliable school alternatives, no school successes in other nations, which have achieved a more democratic resolution of deep-rooted social inequities. Fortunately, however, the usefulness of serious criticism and the force of applied personal hope do not depend on being able to do so.

COLIN GREER
New York City

DIANE RAVITCH writes:

Colin Greer recapitulates his view that public schools have traditionally served the interest of the "haves" by preventing true social mobility. In his book, he made it clear that he holds the public schools primarily responsible for the fact that American society is not entirely egalitarian as well as for what he considers a misplaced faith in the forward social progress of America. The key phrase in his letter is that "poor academic performance at such urban high schools as New York City's Benjamin Franklin, for example, is as important an aspect of successful public-school functioning as is academic achievement at, let us say, the Bronx High School of Science." In Marxist fashion, Mr. Greer perceives the schools as a tool to maintain an unjust and relatively rigid class structure, by assisting the "haves" and suppressing the "have nots."

Mr. Greer's thesis rests on the assertion he makes in his book about the absence of social mobility. He can easily document that some children succeed and others fail; he can also document that in every generation school failure is concentrated among poor children (regardless of race or ethnicity). But he does not establish his contention that there exists in this country a "constancy of economic immobility." In a recent issue of the *Public Interest,* Seymour Martin Lipset summarizes the latest data on social mobility and finds that American society is *more* socially mobile than in the past, and that there is about the same social mobility in various industrialized nations, with the United States having a "slightly higher rate." Lipset also states that studies in the Soviet bloc, Western Europe, Israel, and the U.S. indicate that "increased educational resources and access to more and better schooling are not sufficient to make up for the cultural situation of the family and the norms and values the child receives." Since, as Lipset demonstrates, even such relatively "classless" societies as Russia and Israel have similar problems in schooling their culturally diverse populations, Mr. Greer's analysis is at best not proved.

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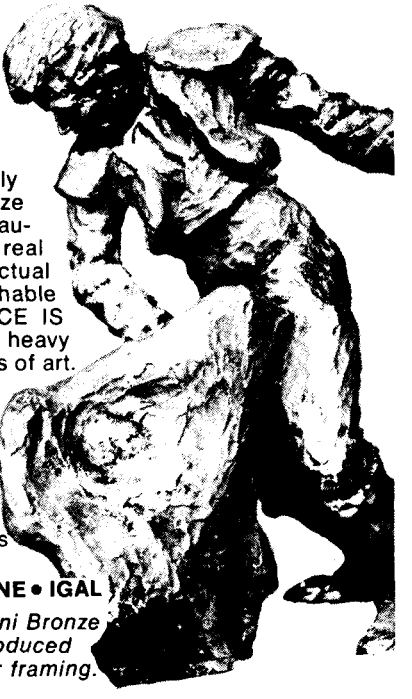

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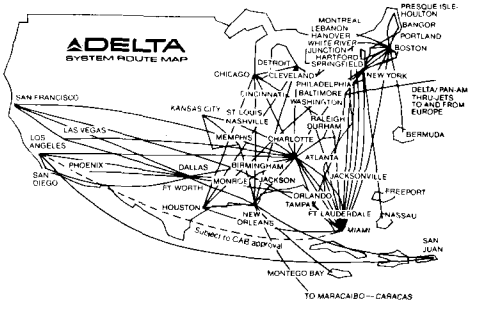

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Robert Coles

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I think there is another conclusion that one may draw from Robert Coles's emphasis on ambiguity and complexity than the one at which Joseph Epstein ["Dr. Coles among the Poor," August 1972] has arrived. One may, of course, conclude from complexity that there is nothing to be done and that we are all "exonerated." But one might also conclude that our effort to make the world a better place should be undertaken with modesty, humility, and awareness of the fragility and imperfection of all human effort. One could also conclude that because of the limited expectation which an awareness of complexity imposes upon us, we also should work with patience and persistence and perseverence precisely because we realize that remarkable or instantaneous results are most unlikely. . . .

At a time when the brilliant economists of Harvard and MIT are gleefully awaiting the opportunity to remake the economic structure of the country so it fits the elegance of the models portrayed in their computer printouts, an awareness of complexity and ambiguity, and the resultant modesty and humility displayed by Robert Coles, seems admirable indeed.

ANDREW M. GREELEY
Center for the Study of American Pluralism
Chicago, Illinois

JOSEPH EPSTEIN writes:

Andrew Greeley misreads me. No one is against an awareness of complexity, especially of a kind that issues in the achievement of greater "patience and persistence and perseverance." I did not conclude that Robert Coles's work actually exonerates us. I did conclude that his variety of complexity—which consists not of avoiding fashionable stands but of taking several of them all at once—is to support people in their feelings of helplessness. I wrote: "If such a good and decent man—and a psychiatrist at that—could spend ten years trying to 'understand' his subject, and confess himself at the end no less bewildered and incompetent and helpless at the complexity of it all than he was at the beginning, can the rest of us possibly be expected to do any better?" The fact is, the rest of us will have to do better.

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Religious Jewry

To the Editor of Commentary:

I agree with David Stern's observation in his review of *My Name Is Asher Lev* [Books in Review, October 1972] that the novels of Chaim Potok portray a highly sentimentalized vision of Brooklyn's Orthodox community. But I must vehemently disagree with Mr. Stern's shallow attempt at socio-religious analysis.

First, the Jewish community is not basically hostile to art and music. Much of the literature concerning the holy sanctuaries deals with the artistic design and musical order which played a sacrosanct role in the services. The present Jewish hostility to art and music is based upon the experience of Jews who lived in nations where the Renaissance had a strong cultural effect. Much of the artistic output of that period was commissioned by, and for, the church. The almost total preoccupation of medieval artists with the figures of Jesus and the crucifixion did not make the Jews—persecuted for his death—sympathetic to "religious art." . . .

Second, as to the "metaphysical schizophrenia" which Mr. Stern finds prevalent in Jews who attempt to lead both religious and secular lives: religious Jews represent a multitude of professions, and their religion has not led to a confusion of identities; rather, they have successfully set the limits of religious introvertism and secular adaptation in their daily and community behavior. On Ivy League campuses, a *yarmulke* is now a proud symbol of a long intellectual and religious tradition. . . .

(Rabbi) Shmuel Krieger
Zeirei Agudath Israel of America
New York City

David Stern writes:

Rabbi Krieger only confirms my original statement: the traditional community has, historically, been hostile to secular art. The "Jewish art" he mentions—and to which I would add the plethora of *kiddush* cups, *mezuzot*, and *menorot*—falls into the entirely different category of ritual artifact; but unlike its Christian counterpart, Jewish ritual art has never risen above its functional origins to the plane of aesthetic symbolism.

As for Rabbi Krieger's second criticism: part of the reason why he might have misunderstood me is that I never wrote "metaphysical schizophrenia" but "metaphorical

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schizophrenia," and referred not to the impossibility of reconciling the religious and secular worlds, but to the dilemma faced by the Jew who must move between them. . . .

As a student at an Ivy League campus who wore a *yarmulke* throughout four years of college, I know full well that metaphorical schizophrenia is never resolved on top of the head but inside it.

Victims

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Robert Alter's "Updike, Malamud & the Fire This Time" [October 1972] says of *The Tenants* that "the supposed vying for the role of chief victim is nowhere present in the novel. Black victimhood cries out from every page of Willie's writing, but Lesser unhesitantly grants his prerogative to the black writer while his own work is in no way concerned with the Jewish role as victim, and he makes very little of that role outside his work." I must take issue with this position, for I think Malamud's Harry Lesser is a Jew who is caught in a web of self-victimization and the main character in the book he is writing is no less than a reflection of himself. In fact, Harry Lesser's "claustrophilia, his fixation on the allures of withdrawal and sordid self-interment" not only points to self-victimization but also has intrinsic connection with the racial situation.

Harry Lesser is a man who is out of touch with his feelings, a man who fears human involvement, love, and death. Harry can't finish his book because he uses art as a way to control life, "to keep death in place" as he thinks. His obsession with remaining in the tenement, his affair with Willie's mistress, and his treatment of Willie himself all show him to be a man who has deluded himself into thinking he is fair-minded and compassionate. Harry is a Jewish intellectual who, by his own admission, can't love, condescends when he criticizes another's work, and secretly takes delight when his criticism strikes home: "The black, eyes tumid, beats his head against Lesser's wall, as the writer, not without pleasure, looks on."

Actually, Willie Spearmint may be seen as a double for Harry Lesser and Willie's stories, filled with violence and hatred, are reflections of Harry's hatred of himself as a human being. Lesser virtually isolates himself from his deepest feelings as well as from commitment to another; he fears and negates his mortality and thus violates his own humanity. Thus Harry may be seen as a victim of his own worst fears and Willie Spearmint is the man he can treat no better than he does himself.

Seen in this light, Malamud's story of a Jew and a black man has intrinsic meaning for the racial situation. The Jew, "everyman," must affirm life for himself if he is to affirm it for the stranger. The ending of *The Tenants* is tragic; at the moment that the death blows are struck, Harry perceives that he and the black man can feel each other's pain. Mercy is needed, as well as daring, to accept the pain that comes from immersion in life.

MARCIA GEALY
Division of Comparative Literature
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If it were not so indicative of the permissiveness of contemporary literary criticism, I might find it amusing that a scholarly analysis of novelistic motivations such as "Updike, Malamud & the Fire This Time," by Robert Alter could completely ignore a prime mover —perhaps the prime mover—money.

I find it hard to believe that there could be a more redeeming objective stimulating some of the utterly foul fare available over the counter these days.

Miscegenation and even integration are too remote from the experiences of the average buyer of $7 or $8 books to warrant their introduction into the story line for the enhancement of "sociological perspectives." Their main value is shock, and the attainment of best-seller listing.

H. T. ROWE
Ridgewood, New Jersey

ROBERT ALTER writes:

Marcia Gealy's letter combines an insight with a confusion. The idea that Willie can be seen as Lesser's double, the externalization of his own self-hatred, is a suggestive one. I am unpersuaded, though, that Malamud consciously controls this doubling with the moral-didactic sureness that Miss Gealy suggests, or that Lesser's particular neurotic pattern, which she sees so well, makes him at all acceptable as an "everyman" of the racial situation. We may all have our neuroses, but Lesser's are so pronounced, so peculiar, so self-destructive, so much the reflection of Malamud's obsessive concerns, that I find it difficult to imagine such a character as our surrogate in the confrontation between white and black.

Finally, I must stand by my assertion that a vying for victimhood between Jew and black is quite absent from the novel because, as I made clear in context, I was talking about historical victimhood, not self-victimization. It's one thing to victimize oneself out of some deep-seated masochistic urge, quite another to be the object of a lynching or a pogrom; and in the novel the Jew yields the crown of historical suffering uncontested to the black man.

Wartime France

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In connection with Stanley Hoffman's "On 'The Sorrow and the Pity' " [September 1972] I'd like to say that Marcel Ophuls is right in singling out France as the only country whose government collaborated with Hitler—the Netherlands did not, Norway did not, Denmark did not, Yugoslavia did not. But Ophuls does not equate the French people with the government. He shows Frenchmen who passively followed the hero of Verdun as well as the heroic resisters. I think that the message of the film is clear: in desperate times an average man would rather stay alive as a dog than die as a lion.

J. W. ALCANTARA
New York City

Quotas and Jobs

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Since the mid-60's I have worked in civil-rights groups attempting to integrate employment in a range of blue- and white-collar occupations in metropolitan Baltimore. That experience, which formed the basis for recent testimony before the Maryland Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, leads me to question Elliott Abrams's theorizing on the subject of proportional representation in employment ["The Quota Commission," October 1972].

In bisecting the work force into an all-white segment and a segment in which blacks are underrepresented in relation to their percentage of the population, Mr. Abrams glosses over the reality of black underrepresentation in de-

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sirable occupations. In the first place, he ignores the fact that black workers constitute a pathetically small percentage of employees in the desirable occupations, rarely even approaching their representation in the work force. Secondly, he fails to recognize the wide variations among employers in the degree to which they employ blacks in specific occupations. These variations are evident in all parts of the country, among industries, among companies within a particular industry, and in public as opposed to private employment. Although many factors could be cited as contributing to the variations . . . it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in the many firms with comparatively low utilization of black workers the racial factor is responsible. By the racial factor, I mean the combination of employers' past racial discrimination and their current hostility or indifference to the employment or advancement of Negro workers.

How have equal-employment commissions operated within these realities? In a metropolitan area with, say, a 25-per-cent black labor force, the commission cannot help but note the vast difference between an employer who employs black people at a 3-per-cent-rate in a specific occupation, and one who employs them at a 15-per-cent rate. Neither demonstrates proportional representation, but the employer at the 3-per-cent rate has been and should be singled out for scrutiny by the anti-discrimination agency. If, as is typical, the employer totally excluded black people from that occupation until the early 60's, how does the agency assure itself of the fact that equal opportunity now exists? The most practical approach is to require that the 3-per-cent employer undertake affirmative actions (probably already accomplished by the 15-per-cent employer), including those which Mr. Abrams states are required by law —active minority recruitment, widespread advertising, and the establishment of training programs in minority communities. As in all serious business efforts, goals and timetables are established for the employer as standards against which his progress may be measured at intervals. If a company is willing to commit the necessary resources, it is usually able to progress toward the goals at a rate sufficient to satisfy the rather low expectations of the equal-opportunity agency. Rarely is the goal of proportional representation set; rarely is it attained; and rarely, if ever, is a company penalized for failure to attain any goal, no matter how low. The fear of widespread implementation of proportional representation may eventually prove justified, but in the foreseeable future it is groundless.

The discussion of employee qualifications, like that of proportional representation, can benefit from a broader factual context than Mr. Abrams provides, or than this letter can include. Without attempting to cover that subject, I would like to comment briefly on Mr. Abrams's presentation of it. He concludes in several cases that EEOC rulings have prevented employers from considering the job-related qualifications of black workers, but all except one of his conclusions cannot be addressed because the EEOC-endorsed criteria are not given. In the one case in which the criteria are set down, the EEOC requires that, instead of rejecting an applicant solely because he has been convicted of a crime, an employer consider such details as the time, nature, and number of convictions, and the employee's immediate past employment record. Far from evidencing a lack of concern for qualifications, these criteria demonstrate an understanding of the relation of past behavior to future performance—and they are in the best humane tradition of rehabilitating ex-convicts who have genuine rehabilitation potential.

IRWIN AUERBACH

Baltimore, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Elliott Abrams is very far from comprehending the full extent of the new ideology that all levels of government are endeavoring to enforce. . . . For example, here in California, state offices have an unofficial "Karma" table which allots to each misfortune in life a value in points which "may" (=must) be used to offset poor performance on civil-service examination. Blackness has the highest value, closely followed by Chicano-ness. But . . . confinement in a mental institution is almost as good as blackness, as is conviction for a felony. Then comes illegitimacy of birth, failure in school or expulsion, etc., etc.

Conversely, one may lose points for a good record in school, and a higher college degree is considered the worst sort of disqualification. . . .

ALEX BERIG

Berkeley, California

ELLIOTT ABRAMS writes:

Alex Berig's letter is most instructive, but I am sure that the California officials he refers to would deny his charges. Undoubtedly they would claim they never pay the slightest attention to Karma unless it is directly job-related.

Irwin Auerbach presents the EEOC position ably, but I remain unpersuaded by it. He argues that great underrepresentation of minorities in a company's work force should subject it to scrutiny, and I agree. We part company, however, when Mr. Auerbach suggests that equal-opportunity agencies usually have low expectations, rarely set proportional representation as a goal, and rarely penalize employers for failing to achieve this goal.

I quite agree that the rehabilitation of ex-convicts is a worthy aim. The question, however, is not whether hiring ex-convicts is in "the best humane tradition," but whether it is required by law. It is one thing for Mr. Auerbach or the EEOC to call the practice enlightened, but it is quite another to insist that it is mandated by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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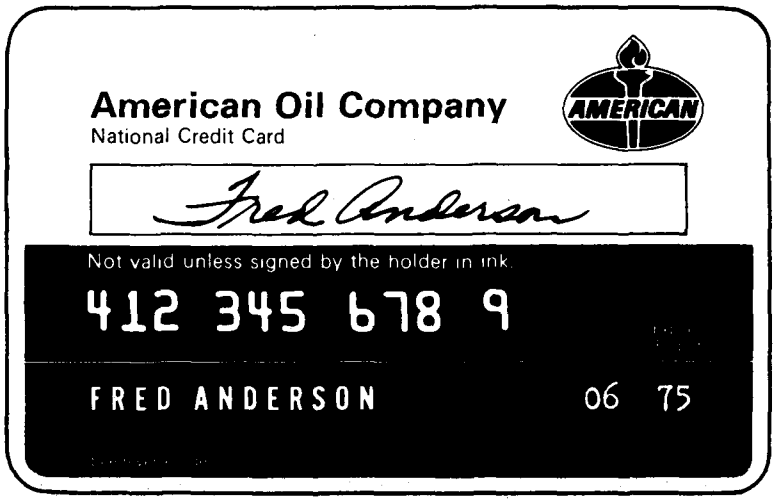

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The Election and the National Mood

Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab

THE reasons underlying Senator McGovern's defeat in the 1972 elections had been thoroughly analyzed long before the polls opened on November 7. There was, indeed, no great trick to predicting the likely drift of the vote, since the nation was wearing its motivations on its sleeve, and no polltaker or political analyst could fail to take notice. But apart from the specific issues and candidates, and apart from the idiosyncrasies of this particular election year, the results of the balloting afford an opportunity to relearn some important lessons about the continuing character of the American electorate.

I

IN THIS election there was no real gap, on political issues, separating the body of McGovern voters and the body of Nixon voters. As the various polls indicated, getting out of the war was foremost in the minds of Americans, along with reducing the high cost of living. But on neither of these issues were the voters split along partisan lines. In a late Gallup poll, more than 7 out of 10 Nixon voters and 9 out of 10 McGovern voters said that getting out of Vietnam was a prime motivation for the way they were voting; pare away the ideological edges, and the figures would coincide.

Similarly with the general issue of the economy. Not surprisingly, over 90 per cent of both Nixon and McGovern voters felt that checking the rise in the cost of living was of major importance to them. But (again allowing for the ideological edges) about an equal percentage of Nixon and McGovern voters were also strongly against the lifting of wage and price controls (58 and 48 per cent), and both sets of voters were overwhelmingly in favor of the government's guaranteeing a job to everyone (74 and 90 per cent). On the matter of crime, the third most pressing item on the minds of the voters, about the same percentage of Nixon and McGovern supporters were anxious for "tougher sentences for lawbreakers" (87 and 72 per cent). The voters, in fact, were on the same side of *all* political issues, including national health insurance. Haynes Johnson of the *Washington Post* recapitulated the typical experience of interviewers when he reported that with respect to *issues,* "the voters we met say they don't see all that much difference between what the two Presidential candidates stand for."

It would be wholly mistaken, then, to conclude that the results of the 1972 election represented a conservative backlash on political or economic matters. Nor, in addition, did evidence emerge of a racial backlash. About the same percentage of white Nixon and white McGovern voters said that they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who would improve opportunities for blacks; in each case, these voters constituted a majority of more than 2-1. The same pattern, but in reverse, applied to the issue of school busing. Both white Nixon and white McGovern supporters were overwhelmingly opposed to "busing schoolchildren to achieve racial balance." Yet, according to the polls, less than 10 per cent of the people thought that busing was a major Presidential issue. It is highly questionable in any case whether opposition to busing can legitimately be seen as evidence of racial backlash, and it does not become less questionable when one considers the fact that only about half of the black people polled indicated they would support a candidate because he *favored* busing. About a third of the blacks said that they would be *less* inclined to support a candidate if he favored busing.

If political and racial issues were not the determinants of this election, neither was the personal attractiveness, or "charisma," of the candidates. Americans were asked in October whether they thought Nixon or McGovern had a "more attractive personality." The kindly polltakers provided a third alternative, "Neither,"

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET and EARL RAAB collaborated on *The Politics of Unreason* which won the Myrdal Prize last year and has just been published in a paperback edition (Harper & Row). Mr. Lipset, who is currently on leave at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, is professor of government and sociology at Harvard. His other works include *Rebellion in the University, Political Man, Revolution and Counterrevolution,* and *The First New Nation.* Mr. Raab is executive director of the Jewish Community Council of San Francisco and the author of *Social Problems.* An earlier article on which Mr. Lipset and Mr. Raab collaborated, "The Non-Generation Gap," appeared in our August 1970 issue.

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who won handily. Barely half of each of the candidate's *own* committed supporters were willing to say that he had an attractive personality. Of course, one does not have to like a person to vote for him, if one thinks he can do an effective job; on the contrary, Americans do not normally expect effective politicians to be likable. But the factor of "trust, credibility, and effectiveness" was apparently equally unrevealing as an index of voter sentiment. On the one hand there was a clear-cut public reaction of mistrust to the McGovern "1,000-per-cent" syndrome, but on the other hand a plurality of Americans in one Harris poll felt that Nixon was also "uncertain and wishy-washy in what he stands for."

Nevertheless, the American voter obviously did find a great difference between the two candidates, something not accounted for by divergencies in economic or political philosophy, or by varying appraisals of personal competency. Approximately where that difference lay was suggested by one typical Harris poll, which reported that the American people by a 2-1 margin found that McGovern had "too extreme liberal views." On the eve of the vote they felt, again by a 2-1 margin, that he wanted to "change things too much." This same thread ran through all the man-in-the-street interviews: "He's too extreme . . . he's too far ahead of his time. . . . He wants to turn things upside down." To be sure, when it came to what McGovern was too "extreme" about, or what he wanted to "change too much," clarity dissolved. Certainly, as we have pointed out, most voters were not disturbed by his desire to get out of Vietnam, or his support of national health insurance, or his proposal of a guaranteed job program. Even most Nixon supporters agreed with him on these basic issues. What disturbed people was the *way* they felt he would pursue these objectives. Thus, union members told pollsters that McGovern's social program was more for "the little man" than was Nixon's, but they also said that Nixon would treat unions "more fairly," and gave him a voting edge on that account. Champ Clark of *Time* found that "Nixonians are not against change. I have yet to meet one who wants the U.S. to stay exactly the way it is. But they have in kindred spirit a sense of orderliness, of tidiness."

"Orderliness" is the key word. It is tempting to say that whereas the 1972 election did not represent a backlash of political conservatism, or of racism, it did represent a cultural backlash. But to say that the election represented a cultural backlash, although true, would also be something of a confusion of cause and effect. It is a fact, for example, that cultural issues like the decriminalization of marijuana tended to be the *only* kinds of issues on which there was a wide disparity between McGovern and Nixon supporters. Thus, there was a 43-point spread between those Nixon supporters who opposed reducing penalties for marijuana use, and those who favored it, while only an 11-point spread separated McGovern supporters who opposed reducing penalties and those who favored it. And marijuana, like abortion and amnesty, was also an age-connected issue; there was a 45-point difference between those aged 18-24 and those 50 and over on the marijuana question. While McGovern did not end up with many more youth votes than did Nixon, young voters constituted over a fifth of those who voted for him altogether—twice the Nixon proportion—and thus showed up heavily on age-connected cultural issues like marijuana. *But these issues did not in themselves determine the election.*

More often than not in America's social and political history, specific cultural issues have served as the symbolic expression of larger and deeper concerns. Americans are not typically opposed to economic and social change. Indeed, progressive change is an American tradition, part of the American creed. Moreover, large sectors of the electorate usually find their self-interest meshing with one or another movement for change. What they resist is change that takes place in a non-traditional manner. One would not, of course, wish to deny the threat of status deprivation which drastic change poses, but the basic threat perceived by the electorate in the McGovern candidacy was not so much to existing social arrangements as to the social order itself, and especially to due process. *That* is the "extremism" which the voters finally rejected, not any liberal social or economic policy *per se*.

II

McGovern's Presidential campaign formally began and practically ended with the Democratic party convention. With very few exceptions (the disastrous 1968 Chicago convention is one), nominees customarily make great gains in the polls immediately after a national convention; for a week or so, a party has been given a monopoly by the media, and the electorate has heard repeated attacks on the opposition and has witnessed a demonstration of party unity at the end of the convention. But in the 1972 campaign, virtually no change was registered in public support for McGovern after the convention that nominated him—a phenomenon which has occurred only once before in modern election history, in the case of Barry Goldwater. Richard Nixon, on the other hand, increased his support in the polls twice, the first time *immediately after* the Democratic convention, when support for him jumped from 53 to 56 per cent, and then again after the Republican convention, when it went from 57 to 64 per cent.

In the case of McGovern, even more than in that of Senator Goldwater in 1964, the negative

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image that helped destroy his campaign was fixed by the convention itself. And as also with the subsequent campaign, what created the image was not the political issues which emerged from the convention, but the way in which the McGovern forces appeared to be disregarding traditional due process. Senator Abraham Ribicoff exclaimed during the convention: "Just look at what's happening: Averell Harriman being beaten by a 19-year-old girl for a place on the New York delegation! That's why I think McGovern is going to win. . . ." But that is exactly why McGovern had so little chance of winning. People may not have cared one way or another about Averell Harriman, but they were suspicious of the arbitrary manner in which he and so many others were being displaced. When Senator Eagleton requested that his nomination be seconded by his friend, Governor Warren Hearns of Missouri, millions of television viewers saw him being turned down in this request in favor of a seconding speech by an undergraduate coed. There was a consistent pattern being followed here. Adult white males were being symbolically ignored or even, as in the case of the duly-elected Daley delegation from Illinois, expelled from the convention. Party regulars, representatives of labor and of traditionally Democratic ethnic blocs, were being systematically passed over and displaced, in an apparently high-handed manner, by a faction identified with the "new" constituencies: the young, the poor, women, homosexuals. At the head of this faction stood George McGovern.*

McGovern himself seemed aware that he was an outsider in the traditional party, and not only from the point of view of the older politicians. At the post-convention Al Smith dinner in New York, he commented, "I feel a little like Al Smith addressing the Baptist League of Eastern Texas." This was an amazing statement to come from the Presidential nominee of the Democratic party. The Al Smith dinner, after all, is not only a Catholic commemoration, it is *de facto* a significant Democratic party festival; Protestants and Jews like Herbert Lehman, Harry Truman, and Lyndon Johnson have addressed it in their time, men who were not and could not be ill at ease among the core constituency of New York's Catholic Democrats. But the real irony of the moment lay in McGovern's comparison: for the hard-necked Southern Baptists before whom Al Smith spoke during his campaign ended up voting for Herbert Hoover!

But if the new McGovernite politicians were factionalists, they also had qualities generally associated with extremism: they were ideological, moralistic, and evangelistic. These are characteristics which a coalition party, containing sharply diverse factions, cannot afford to harbor or encourage. In a system based on two competing coalition parties, there has to be a much greater capacity for fudging issues, for hedging, for ideological compromise and impurity, than in multi-party systems in which each party appeals during elections to limited sectors of the nation. Only thus can a coalition-party system reflect the needs of a highly diversified society. But the McGovern convention, like McGovern himself, shunned political compromise, and embraced instead a fundamentally religious notion of purity, suitable more to a third-party movement than to the standard-bearers of a coalition party. In the course of an interview McGovern remarked: "All my life I've grown up in a religious climate where I was taught that life is a struggle between good and evil, and that's what it's all about." But this kind of political moralism makes the electorate uneasy. When McGovern told an interviewer, William Greider of the Washington *Post*, that he felt very strongly that the 1972 election should be seen in moral terms, Greider, startled, commented: "Well, the good-and-the-evil—Washington would say certainly, wow, that's an arrogant black-and-white description of the choice." Unfazed, the candidate replied, "That's the way I feel."

In this, McGovern clearly resembled another Democratic nominee of three-quarters of a century ago, William Jennings Bryan, who also lost heavily among traditional Democratic voters, particularly Catholics and Jews. Both combined an evangelical Protestant outlook and style with an effort to push the country to the Left. McGovern, like Bryan, moved through his campaign with the "deep inner certitude of godly men." As Peter Goldman and Richard Stout noted, he engaged basically in "the politics of the revival tent." A critical section of the American electorate has a highly developed distaste for political moralism of this kind, and the combined experience of 1964 and 1972 shows that this distaste extends in both directions, to the Left as well as to the Right.

WHERE McGovern was concerned the paradox was that many of those who were repelled by the moralistic tone of his campaign saw that campaign, and even the candidate himself, as representing or embodying an *im*moral force. For McGovern's campaign repeatedly associated itself with the more permissive position in the area of personal morals, and, thanks in part to astute political maneuvering on the part of President Nixon, also came to be linked with an anti-work, "welfare-ethic" view of society. The issue of "quotas" and "proportional representation" fell partly within this rubric, as did the question of whether the candidate favored the principle of equal results over the principle of equal opportunity as the basis of social and economic policy. The general populace perceived

* See "The New Politics & the Democrats," by Penn Kemble and Josh Muravchik in the December 1972 issue. —Ed.

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this cluster of issues as a single whole. It regarded marijuana abuse, sexual excess, the subversion of the work and performance principle, as signals of a total attack on the American social order, and it identified them all with the McGovern candidacy.

This perception of McGovern as an "immoral" political moralist colored public reaction in turn to the issues of corruption and hypocrisy. The charge of hypocrisy is a constant potential hazard to any politician who establishes himself as a factional leader and then attempts to make the delicate transition to coalition leader. Hubert Humphrey offers the example of a one-time factional leader who began this process of transition while serving in the Senate, and accomplished it successfully, but not without the image-trace of hypocrisy dogging him in certain quarters. Richard Nixon, similarly, was a factional leader in the 1950's; he managed to make the transition to coalition leader, within his party, partly because of his association with President Eisenhower, partly because of being set off in contrast to Barry Goldwater, whose arch-factionalist slogan in 1964 was "A choice, not an echo." But like Humphrey, Nixon has never been free of the charge of hypocrisy. (It remains to be seen now whether Vice President Agnew, the factional leader *par excellence,* will make the necessary transition by 1976.)

Senator McGovern, however, never really moved beyond being a factional leader, despite his few efforts in that direction after the convention—efforts which opened *him* to charges of hypocrisy. Thus, when the Senator began to abandon a number of the more left-wing or extreme moralistic positions which he had taken during the primary campaign—especially with respect to welfare policy, the maintenance of military forces in Southeast Asia, tax reform, and the question of support for Israel in the Middle East—he found, to his amazement and fury, that such actions were regarded by many as hypocritical, and that in consequence a substantial majority of those polled saw him as less "moral" than Richard Nixon. He blamed this, in large part, on the press, which emphasized his shifts rather than what he regarded as the essential consistency of his position. But in fact the public's impression was a reaction to the image he himself had created.

McGovern had presented himself as a new type of candidate who was above the petty compromises of politics, who was *totally* different in this respect from Richard Nixon. The standard image of Nixon, going back to the 1950's, was above all that of a "politician," that is, a man with relatively few principles, prepared to adjust his policies and tactics to fit the slightest shifts in the public mood. Nixon's enemies called him an unprincipled opportunist, while his friends stressed his flexibility, his capacity to change with the times, his undoctrinaire conception of politics. Both descriptions referred basically to the same behavior, and it was the kind of behavior to which McGovern had defined himself as being absolutely opposed. Small wonder, then, that public reaction took the form it did when George McGovern, who had led the two-year-long pre-convention battle against the "corrupt politicians" and labor bosses, turned around in the course of his campaign and said of President Lyndon Johnson that he had "sacrificed himself to gain peace"; endorsed Boston's Louise Day Hicks against a liberal New-Politics opponent; went out of his way to praise Richard Daley (Hubert Humphrey stayed away from Daley during the 1968 campaign); dumped Senator Eagleton after giving him "1,000 per cent support." The "politics of the revival tent" simply did not mix with those of Tammany Hall.

As with the issue of hypocrisy, so with the issue of corruption in government. The polls consistently showed a majority of the electorate believing that Nixon would be able to handle corruption better than McGovern. In the light of the Watergate scandal, this especially confused and infuriated McGovern and many of his supporters. But the relatively mild reaction to the Watergate affair must be seen in the context, not only of McGovern's perceived hypocrisy, but of his perceived extremism: that is, his association with cultural radicalism. Under ordinary circumstances, with a more conventional coalition candidate, a scandal like Watergate would probably have cut seriously into Republican Presidential support (in fact it may have played a role in Congressional voting). It is likely that its impact was as small as it was not simply or even primarily because of public apathy about corruption, but because large segments of the public saw a bigger, more threatening, and ultimately more corrupting attack on the social order coming from the other side. Anarchic process and anarchic morals, pursued with evangelical fury, were evidently felt to be more ominous than political espionage.

III

In the spring of 1972, the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan asked the American people: "All things considered, how satisfied are you with life in the United States today?" More than three-quarters of those asked said that they were satisfied or very satisfied. Only 9 per cent indicated that they were dissatisfied. Surprisingly, those at the lower rungs of the socioeconomic ladder indicated *more* satisfaction with American life than those higher up. For example, 42 per cent of those in the lowest economic rank said that they were "very satisfied," as compared with 31 per cent of those in the highest. As to the black population, although in general it expressed less satisfaction than the white, only a total of 17

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per cent expressed actual dissatisfaction. This overwhelmingly favorable response did not mean that the American people were without severe gripes. They had specific complaints: about income (a third), about housing (a quarter), about the schools (a third), and so forth. According to Gallup such complaints increased (except among blacks) in the two years preceding the election, while Harris reported an increase in "feelings of alienation" (that is, feelings of political powerlessness) among Americans from 1966 through 1972.

From other evidence, however, it became apparent that neither the specific complaints nor the feelings of alienation were directed against the nature of the traditional social order itself. Thus, more of the alienated people, according to Harris, were Nixon supporters than McGovern supporters. A similar perspective was offered by Teresa E. Levitin and Warren Miller of the Michigan Center, who built a portrait of two divergent streams in America which they called the Silent Minority and the Liberal Coalition. There were no specific "issues" involved in constructing this model, only "style," related to a basic stance toward the American social order. The Liberal Coalition was comprised of those who favored protest and the counter-culture, and opposed law-and-order and the established agents of social control. Levitin and Miller calculated that only about 12 per cent of the public fell into this category. Conversely, only about 16 per cent fell into the category of the Silent Minority —that is, those who held reverse positions on all of the four criteria. The vast majority were in the middle.

It is relevant to note in this connection that not even the ideological edges—the Liberal Coalition and the Silent Minority as isolated by Levitin and Miller—were fixed in their place by social class. It was not just the affluent American who was found to feel a stake in the social order. There was, of course, an affluent-class bias toward the Republican party, but on the other hand there was also a tendency for some of the affluent to be attracted to the anti-order style of the Liberal Coalition. But their disaffection was of a different quality altogether from those who had specific gripes about housing, employment, and the working of the system. This was subsequently illustrated in the one major effort made by the McGovern convention leadership to accommodate an "opposition" faction, that of George Wallace. The McGovernites worked hard to prevent Wallace from losing the votes of delegates in states in which he had won the preferential primaries. Wallace delegates were offered every opportunity to present their case, both in committees and at the convention. Wallace himself was allowed to address the convention at length during the platform debate, a courtesy never before shown to an announced Presidential candidate. Orders were given, and carried out, not to boo or heckle this representative of the most powerful racist element in American politics.

All this was done by the McGovernites on the assumption that the name of the game was not "issues" but root alienation. It was hoped that the mass base of "alienated" and "populist" sentiment represented by Wallace could be attracted to the form of anti-establishment politics found in the McGovern movement. Yet, in the first place, any analysis of the opinions of Wallace supporters would have clearly suggested that their frustration had little in common with those associated with McGovern supporters. It should also have been clear that if the Wallaceites and McGovernites were both extremist, Wallace extremism leaned toward violating due process in order to *maintain* the social order, not in order to overturn it. Thus the Wallaceites ended up voting 2-1 for Nixon.*

IN EVALUATING the response of the electorate to the strains of recent years, however, it is important to note the abundant evidence that the large majority of Americans have not only indicated their continuing commitment to the traditional social order; they have also indicated a continuing commitment to the traditional economic and class issues and values associated with the image of the New Deal-Fair Deal-Great Society policies pressed by Democratic leaders from Roosevelt to Humphrey. Opinion surveys show two seemingly contradictory findings. The proportion of Americans describing themselves as "conservatives" rather than "liberals" reached a point in the 60's where the once-convincing liberal lead had been replaced by a conservative one on the order of 2-1 (although a recent Harris poll has indicated a very

* Despite what McGovern said after the election, the Wallace vote was not a determining factor in the final result. If Wallace had run on his own ticket and secured around 15 per cent of the vote, the election would have wound up with 50 per cent for Nixon, 35 for McGovern.

There are other aspects of the final voting which will deserve greater study on this score as well. Over 90 per cent of the black vote in the ghettos was for McGovern, but he won only about 80 per cent of the black vote in non-ghetto areas. And only 67 per cent of the one out of 16 blacks who live in the suburbs voted for McGovern. Tangled in this pattern are a social-class pull, plus a new feeling of stake in the American society, plus a highly developed sense of the liberal political and economic agenda.

Analyses of Jewish voting are also instructive. On its face the Jewish vote represented a sharp departure from the recent past, 2-1 for the Democratic nominee as against 4-1 last time around. But actually the Jews were roughly at the same distance from the rest of the population in 1972 as they were in 1968. The unique aspect of the Jewish vote, the fact that Jews do not tend to vote more heavily Republican as their incomes rise, continued to show. The interesting fact is that preliminary precinct analyses indicate that lower-income Jews defected more sharply to the Republicans, on the Presidential vote, than did upper-income Jews. (This was, of course, true of lower-income ethnics in general, but arose from a different initial pattern.)

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slight liberal upswing to 19 per cent once again). But while many more people now call themselves conservatives rather than liberals, the Democratic advantage over the GOP in party registration and in party identification in the polls is still extremely large. This seeming conflict appears to reflect a change in the meaning attached to the terms "liberal" and "conservative." Where they once were seen primarily in economic terms, e.g., attitude toward social-security policy, governmental economic planning, trade-union rights, progressive tax policy, and the like, they now appear to apply more to feelings and attitudes on cultural and moral issues. Conversely, however, the variations between the two major parties are still seen in economic and class terms: most voters still identify the Republicans as the party of "big business," and the Democrats as the party of the "people." The Democrats continue to be seen as the best party for helping the poor, the trade unions, the workers, and for handling unemployment and other economic issues, including tax policy.

The various referenda in 1972 testify to the validity of this new set of findings. In California for example, the electorate voted by close to 2-1 against legalizing possession of marijuana and in favor of restoring the death penalty, but it also voted by an overwhelming majority against a proposition which had been defined as an effort to prevent the farm labor union led by Cesar Chavez from operating effectively. California gave Richard Nixon a substantial majority, but the GOP strength in the State Assembly fell from 35 seats to 29, while the Democrats jumped from 45 to 51. And the Republican Assembly leader, Robert Monagan, publicly expressed doubt that the Republicans would be able to retain the governorship in the 1974 elections.

The American electorate is thus caught in a crosscurrent between political liberalism and cultural conservatism. Its conservatism comes to the fore when the nature of cultural change seems to signify a basic threat to the social order. The McGovern campaign, starting with the convention, appeared to be doing that in 1972, and the population opted for the traditional social order. But few were happy with the choice they had to make. For the other side of the coin was that President Nixon had done nothing to convince the electorate that he possessed the kind of social sense which boded well for liberal domestic economic programs. In consequence, there was no Rooseveltian exultation among the populace about the election or its results. As a matter of fact, ambivalence at the polls was demonstrably deep. "Which candidate are you most apathetic about?" asked one cartoon pollster. And, even after voting, many people felt that they had not yet quite made up their minds. The abstention rate was high—an expression not so much of apathy as of liberal-conservative ambivalence.*

IV

The principal issue which gave rise to the New-Politics campaigns of Eugene McCarthy and Robert F. Kennedy in 1968, and which underlay much of the ardor of the McGovern pre-nomination battle, was the Vietnam war. In spite of the poll data indicating that economic and class concerns were more likely to find support among traditionally Democratic groups, whose backing he desperately needed, McGovern returned time and again to the issue of the war, reserving his most extreme language for this topic.

Yet the record seems clear that McGovern misread the mood of the country on the war too, even though he had been personally involved in the publication of the most comprehensive and sophisticated book-length analysis of that mood, *Vietnam and the Silent Majority: The Dove's Guide* (1970), written by three major academic authorities on public opinion, Milton Rosenberg, Sidney Verba, and Philip Converse. McGovern contributed the Foreword to this detailed analysis of the many opinion surveys on attitudes toward the war. Among other things, the book revealed that since 1969 a majority of Americans had been convinced that our involvement in the war in Vietnam was a mistake. On the other hand, the authors documented and stressed the fact that most Americans tended "to be patriotic, to be proud of the fact that we have 'never lost a war,' and to be moved by the symbols of patriotism such as the flag." Moreover, the bulk of the public wished to end our commitment in Vietnam under conditions that would avoid a Communist takeover of South Vietnam. Most Americans (this continued to be the case well into the polls taken in 1972) favored giving support to the anti-Communist forces in South Vietnam after an American withdrawal.

Concurrent with a strong desire for peace on the part of the large majority was strong disapproval of the militant confrontationist tactics of sections of the anti-war movement. Even young people under 30—and by overwhelming majorities—condemned student strikes against the war. These negative attitudes toward anti-war and student protest were not limited to those with mild feelings about the war. As the authors pointed out about the results of a study completed in 1968:

> Respondents were asked to evaluate a wide range of political leaders and groups on a "feeling" scale, ranging from extremely negative to

* In the Jewish precincts analyzed, the abstention rates in lower- and middle-income areas were staggering; in one case the percentage registered and not voting increased from 8 to 25 per cent between 1968 and 1972.

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highly positive. Reactions toward "Vietnam war protesters" were by a substantial amount the most negative half of the scale, and more than 33 per cent placed them at the extreme negative point, which was not otherwise much employed. But one can go further. Sixty-three per cent of those believing the war was a mistake viewed protesters negatively, and *even of the group favoring complete withdrawal from Vietnam 53 per cent put the protesters on the negative side of the scale.* Plainly, opposition to the war and opposition to active protest against it go together for a significant part of the population. [Emphasis in original.]

As of 1970, George McGovern seemed to understand the implications of these facts. In his Foreword to *Vietnam and the Silent Majority* he acknowledged that many Americans who opposed the war did so for the "wrong" reasons. As a result, he said:

> Long-time apostles against our intervention in Vietnamese affairs must therefore face the disquieting choice between ending the war sooner for what we see as many of the wrong reasons—"it is costing too much," "the general policy is sound, but it has not worked here," and the like—or waiting and debating until a decisive majority of the American people accept our notion of an appropriate U.S. foreign policy and is thus ready to demand, for the right reasons, that the fighting be stopped.
>
> The former approach is more compelling if we consider only the young men who must die and be maimed, the opportunities which will be lost, and the more complete physical and human destruction of a tiny nation which will be inflicted if we are to wait for the latter. Indeed, if it has been immoral for us to bring the battlefield of our misguided war with Communism to the innocent people of Vietnam and to sacrifice their country in pursuit of our "larger" interests, then it is just as immoral for advocates of peace to allow the annihilation to continue until we complete the ambitious task of putting America's conscience in order.

By 1972 Senator McGovern had evidently forgotten these words. During his campaign for the Presidency he constantly issued statements which could only have outraged many Americans who opposed the war for the "wrong" reasons. His moralistic strictures against Richard Nixon, his comparing of the consequences of the President's actions with those of Adolf Hitler, his seemingly unabashed assumption that his own election would probably be followed immediately by the fall of the Saigon government and its replacement by a Communist regime, his praise of draft-evaders who had fled the country, simply alienated many of these Americans.

THE surveys summarized in *Vietnam and the Silent Majority* also pointed up, two years before the election, another basic weakness of the subsequent McGovern strategy, namely, its assumption that the enlarged youth vote would provide the margin for electoral victory. McGovern strategist Fred Dutton, in a pre-primary campaign memorandum which McGovern personally found credible, had anticipated a considerable majority for McGovern among the twenty-five million new voters between 18 and 24. Dutton estimated that three-quarters of them would actually vote, and that three-quarters of those who balloted would vote for a New-Politics Democratic nominee. This advantage would presumably be sufficient to offset any defections among the older segments of the electorate.

Yet a variety of opinion surveys, many of them reported in the volume introduced by Senator McGovern, indicated that these were ridiculously optimistic forecasts, and that in fact youth as such possessed no special anti-war or movement-oriented characteristics. The authors pointed out that strong anti-war sentiment was limited largely to students attending the minority of leading schools and to their parents. Otherwise, "there is no sign whatever of a younger generation—say those under 30—that makes consistently dovish responses, thereby putting it in sharp opposition to a hawkish older generation." Just the reverse was true: "whites under 30, particularly males, have been in the aggregate quite hawkish in terms of desires to solve the Vietnam problem through escalation." In effect, the authors concluded, as had many other analysts of youth and student behavior, there was no "generation gap" on this issue but rather "a profound cleavage on Vietnam among the young themselves."

This, of course, was precisely what showed up in the pre-election surveys and in the voting returns. According to the findings of a CBS survey of 17,405 respondents taken as they were leaving the polls on election day, the 18-24 group divided 46 per cent for Nixon and 52 for McGovern; while among the 25-29-year-old group, Nixon led 54-44. McGovern did only slightly better among students, 54-45, than he did among first-time voters as a whole. And in conformity with all previous studies of the electoral participation of first-time voters, only 47 per cent of those under 24 actually bothered to go to the polls. Thus the generation of Consciousness III (McGovern also wrote a blurb for Charles Reich's *The Greening of America*) turned out never to have existed, never to have been "out there," available, and waiting for the call of a moralistic New Politics.

And if young voters—McGovern's much-vaunted "sure" constituency—were split among themselves on Vietnam, it should hardly have come as a surprise to anyone that the country as a whole was similarly divided on this issue, nor that McGovern should have proved unable even to summon a majority among those favoring an end to the war. Indeed, survey after survey

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showed most people who favored peace in Vietnam believing that the reelection of Richard Nixon would be the best way to accomplish that goal. For Richard Nixon's proclaimed policy was to describe American withdrawal as "peace with honor"—i.e., avoiding a Communist takeover—while Senator McGovern, in another display of his evangelical moralism, presented withdrawal as a deserved defeat—that is, the morally superior course of action.

V

In sum, George McGovern and his strategists totally misjudged the character of the American electorate. The convention and the campaign were conducted as though the American public consisted of two large factions: one basically alienated from the American order, the other evilly dedicated to turning the clock back. There undoubtedly are such factions in the country, but they are hardly large ones, and they do not represent the greater majority of the American electorate. Throughout the 60's, and especially since 1965, many Americans felt that they were experiencing an enormous amount of cultural change, and the last man they wanted for President in 1972 was one who was identified with those who proposed to carry cultural change further, when the social order was already a-tremble. This does not mean that these same Americans were prepared to reject programs for social reform in areas such as health, educational opportunity, equal rights, or the economy. The opinion surveys indicated clear and continuing majorities in favor of extending opportunity to the underprivileged, to those facing discrimination, to the handicapped, while at the same time restoring a sense of personal security to those who live in the urban areas.

Furthermore, all other things being equal, the majority of Americans would still prefer the "party of compassion" to the party they associate with the business elite; nothing attests to this fact more strikingly than President Nixon's failure in the election to carry Republican Congressional or local candidates on his coattails. The GOP decline in governorships over a four-year period from 31 in 1968 to 19 in 1972 was a prolonged landslide in reverse. Indeed, in many ways the President was a tellingly weak candidate. In each of his previous national races, 1960 and 1968, as well as in the California gubernatorial contest in 1962, his Democratic rivals had started considerably back in the polls and had managed to close the gap: Hubert Humphrey, for example, came from 16 points behind to an almost dead heat in 1968. In 1970, when the President campaigned vigorously for Republican Congressional candidates, he failed utterly to sway the electorate. From this point of view the Nixon electoral victory was an amazing phenomenon; it occurred in spite of the fact that his campaign style and personality clearly had a negative effect on the public, and in spite of the fact that a majority of Americans still prefers the Democratic to the Republican party.

Through a peculiar accident of history, the Democratic party in 1972 was divided among a number of candidates. The representative of the smallest faction of a major party ever to secure the Presidential nomination won out within the party—and then continued to act like a factional leader (only 30 per cent of Democrats polled by Gallup just before the Miami convention favored McGovern). The result was a landslide for a Republican candidate who has never possessed widespread charismatic appeal, and who clearly polled more "reluctant" votes than any candidate in recent political history. There are lessons to be drawn from this event. The Republicans learned theirs after 1964; whether the Democrats will do likewise remains an open question.

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Dayan as Politician

Hillel Halkin

It was, I believe, the Israeli author Yoram Kaniuk who, in a newspaper article published years ago, compared Moshe Dayan to the Kennedys. He was referring, as I recall, to a rough-edged elegance of action, a kind of democratic "class," and perhaps, too, to that peculiar quality of fatedness that we associate with the lives of our heroes. The average politician who attains power over our lives does so, more often than not, through a combination of cunning, determination, hard work, and sheer luck, sometimes more luck than he deserves; yet luck is a different thing from Fortune, and few of our public figures are suspected by us of being protégés of the latter. We recognize them, it would seem, by their violent mishaps no less than by their successes, Fortune being a goddess whose favors the cautious beware. Dayan's credentials seem authentic enough. They include an eye shot out by a sniper during a reconnaissance patrol for the British in Lebanon in 1941; an only brother killed during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war; being buried alive by a landslide during a private, and illegal, archeological expedition in 1969; romantic scandals; a divorce. But the clincher, of course, is that piratical eye-patch, worn almost jauntily, like a crack regimental beret. To make off with such a souvenir from death has always been a mark of the hero.

It may come as a surprise to learn from Shabtai Teveth's newly-published and well-researched biography of Dayan* that he has on several occasions resorted to painful and unsuccessful plastic surgery in an effort to be able to dispense with the eye-patch, yet rather than disillusion us as to his motives for wearing it, this is simply more likely to confirm our suspicion that once a man has taken on a public self he does not easily cast it off again. Not that Dayan has ever shown signs of feeling uncomfortably confined by this self, whose political benefits he obviously enjoys—yet just what he thinks of it is another matter. Indeed, watching him expertly play with the press on the television screen, with that lopsided, mischievous grin of his, that unflappable self-confidence, that barely perceptible sense of detachment that never seems wider than the crack between an accomplished actor and his role, one sometimes wonders what he thinks about anything. This too is part of his political charm. One often hears Israelis arguing over what Dayan *really* believes about this or that, which is not something they do with Golda Meir, Abba Eban, Yigal Allon, or Pinchas Sapir. The others, unjustly perhaps, are assumed to have minds like their speeches; and if they are keeping any secrets from the nation, these are presumably as untitillating as their public appearances. Dayan, on the other hand, has the excitement of a good mystery: one never knows, or at least one likes to think one never knows, just what he will say or do next. To his admirers, his behavior is brilliantly pragmatic; to his critics, dangerously inconstant. The public, as far as can be judged, approves of it well enough. A recent public-opinion poll to determine the most popular candidate to succeed Mrs. Meir, who has been threatening with increasing persistence to step down as prime minister either before or right after the November 1973 elections, showed Dayan ahead of his closest contender, education minister Allon, by 69 to 21 per cent, and of his two other most frequently mentioned rivals, foreign minister Eban and finance minister Sapir, by even more.

Teveth's biography does not throw much light on where Dayan is heading politically, but it is informative about where he has come from, and it is certainly the first book about him to go beyond conventional panegyrics and attempt to deal

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* *Moshe Dayan, The Soldier, The Man, The Legend*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson (London); to be published here in February by Houghton Mifflin, translated by Leah and David Zinder, 373 pp., $8.95.

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with him in all his considerable complexity.* The author, a reporter for the liberal daily *Ha'aretz*, had the advantage in this of a good working relationship with his subject (one presumably acquired while writing a previous book, *The Cursed Blessing*, a favorable study of Israeli military policy in the occupied West Bank), who agreed to make available to him a large number of private papers and sometimes surprisingly frank reminiscences, especially from the periods of his childhood and youth. It is the first part of Teveth's book, in fact, which deals with Dayan's early years as the son of Russian *halutzim* in the malarial Valley of Jezreel, and later, with his initiation into the Haganah, that is the most interesting, not least because it nicely evokes an entire era of Palestinian-Jewish life which, though only a generation or two removed from us in time, already seems far more so in terms of human experience. As the biography nears the present, on the other hand, this richness of detail begins to thin; one can practically sense both Dayan himself and Teveth's other informants growing more reticent by the page; and, forced to fall back on more conventional sources, the narrative suffers. This is especially true of the treatment of the years since the 1967 war, which have marked Dayan's return from political limbo to a position of national power exceeded only by Mrs. Meir's. It is here, precisely where one's curiosity is greatest, that the man slips tantalizingly back again behind the legend.

TEVETH is not one of those biographers who feel the regrettable compulsion to novelize their material, nor, less happily perhaps, does his style ever range beyond journalese, yet there is something novelistic nonetheless in his ability to sketch a credible character with a few broad strokes and then follow the lines of development over several hundred pages as they alternately branch off and converge. His portrait of Dayan's parents, certainly, might almost have been taken from the pages of a European *Bildungsroman*: the stubborn, hard-nosed, egotistical father, his devotion to his Zionist work a frequently convenient mask for his own consuming ambition, and the gentle, long-suffering, artistic mother, striving to transmit a love of finer things to her children in the midst of a meager material life. In the typical novel, of course, the son grows up to be an artist, much to the chagrin of his father, who had dreamed of seeing him become a famous man of action and affairs. Curiously, however, Dayan himself seems always to have felt closer to his mother; as a child his chief talent was drawing, an ability he has retained to this day; and of his own children, one has become a competent writer and the other an actor and screen star. Even as a politician Dayan has on occasion been known to strike an unexpectedly lyrical note. Consider, for example, the following impromptu remarks made in 1969, which Teveth does not cite in his book. Asked by an Israeli reporter whether, as commander of the military occupation forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, he did not feel discomfited by the "looks of hate" directed at him by the conquered population, he replied:

> As a boy, when I used to travel a lot about the Valley of Jezreel with my father, we often ran into Arabs. In winter especially they used to cover their faces entirely with their headcloths, so that only their noses and eyes were left showing. My father, who wasn't born in this country —he came here from Russia when he was seventeen—used to say to me: "Just look at them, there's murder in their eyes!" But those Arabs weren't murderers, they were just simple peasants, and because it was rainy, and because they were cold, they wrapped their faces all around. All you could see of them were those glittering black eyes. To me they were beautiful. My father thought that he recognized in them the looks he remembered from [the Russian peasants in] his little village in Russia, but that still didn't make murderers of those Arabs. . . .

One hardly knows which is more striking: the memory itself, the deft yet gentle rebuke of the reporter, or the fact that something so authentically if simply poetic should have survived in such a man and disingenuously chosen to surface, of all places, at a televised press conference.

Dayan generally has been associated with a "hawkish" line toward the Arabs, an identification that would on the whole seem to be correct as regards his positions on military policy and on returning or bargaining away the occupied territories. At the same time, as both Teveth and a number of other Israeli commentators have pointed out, there is a streak of stubborn caution in him that belies the reputation for recklessness that he has acquired. It is relatively little known,

* Unfortunately, much of this complexity is lost in the rather stiff English translation, from which close to 40 per cent of the original Hebrew text has been cut. In his introductory remarks to the English edition, Teveth gallantly takes the blame for this himself, stating that he wished to "select out certain passages which [are] of less vital interest to the non-Israeli reader." But it is difficult not to suspect in all this the heavy hand of the publisher. On p. 39 of the Hebrew, for example, Teveth tells the story of how once, as a child, when Dayan wished to play with a ball that his parents had given another child as a present and was persistently rebuffed, he took it in his teeth and bit a hole in it; in the English text this episode, as well as many like it, fails to appear, though it is difficult to discern what about it was deemed inappropriate for the English reader. Even when passages have been cut that do deal at length with the intricacies of Israeli politics or history, these are often precisely the ones that are needed to place Dayan's actions in some sort of meaningful perspective. Surely the publishers might have let the English reader decide for himself what to read; failing this, they might at least have acknowledged that their editing was determined more by considerations of length and the economics of the trade than by their concern for the public's powers of concentration.

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for instance, that during the Six-Day War Dayan gave the army express (and unobeyed) orders not to advance to the Suez Canal and was the last member of the cabinet to hold out against attacking the Syrian Golan Heights, or that he was highly skeptical of the wisdom of the Israeli decision to bomb Egyptian industrial installations during the fighting along the Canal in 1970—in all three cases, apparently, because of his fears of Russian reaction. Moreover, he has consistently argued for more liberal policies toward the Arab inhabitants of the "territories," and has often enacted them on his own initiative by virtue of his powers as minister of defense. In this he has been more moderate than such "dovish" ministers as Eban or Sapir—or, for that matter, Mrs. Meir herself, who in a recent interview declared her view of Israel's ideal borders to be, "The less Arabs [within them] the better, the less Arabs the better!"

Israeli attitudes toward both Arabs in general and the "territories" in particular are far more complex than some observers in Israel, and most outside it, assume. There are, of course, out-and-out annexationists who are perfectly oblivious of the rights or feelings of the Arabs involved, just as there are anti-annexationists who are deeply concerned about both; but there are also many Israelis who are willing to run the considerable risk of holding on to a large Arab population against its will because, on a human level at least, they are genuinely unprejudiced toward it and assume—naively perhaps—that a *modus vivendi* can eventually be worked out, just as there are many others who would return as much territory as possible, not because political morality demands it but because the mere thought of having so many Arab neighbors makes them uncomfortable. These conflicting attitudes have commonly been attributed to a "generation gap" in Israel between young and old, or between native-born Sabras and foreign-born immigrants (Dayan, in his reply to the reporter, seemed to imply both), but the reality would appear to cut across such simple categories and to rest upon a broader stratum of sensibilities, values, and beliefs.

Politically, too, the lines run every which way. Which, for instance, is to be considered the more "pro-" and which the more "anti-" Arab platform: that of the Israeli Right, which has called for immediate annexation of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, accompanied by the immediate offering of full Israeli citizenship to their inhabitants, or that of the Labor government, which pays homage to the principle of returning a maximum number of conquered Arabs to Arab jurisdiction, but seems content in the meantime to rule them indefinitely as stateless non-citizens of nowhere? And what, in theory at least, is one to make of the curious if no doubt superficial resemblance of the first position to the call of the revolutionary Left for a democratic, binational Palestinian state in which both Jews and Arabs are to live side by side and enjoy equal political rights? Dayan's own attitude toward Arabs, as Teveth describes it, has been nothing if not ambivalent from childhood on, but he is probably the only high-ranking politician in Israel today possessing the capacity to empathize with them and with their culture in anything but the most abstract sense.

Though Dayan has spoken out repeatedly against the idea of making Israeli citizens out of the Arabs of the "territories," arguing, undoubtedly correctly, that this is the last thing they themselves want, he has in the last year or two moved decidedly closer to the annexationist position of the Right. One need only compare his much-quoted remark made in the summer of 1967 about waiting for a "telephone call" from Hussein with his recent statements about the need to consider Israel the permanent authority in the "territories" and his intimations that he would oppose any peace treaty based on returning to Jordan even that truncated portion of the West Bank carved out by the so-called "Allon Plan," whose terms are presently as close as the government of Israel has come to an official policy toward the "territories." In part, no doubt, this shift reflects an inner evolution in his assessment of both the desirability and the feasibility of keeping the "territories" in one form or another, though just how he envisions this being done he has never made terribly clear. (To judge by his latest pronouncements Dayan seems to believe that the inhabitants of the "territories" should remain—or in the case of the Gaza Strip, become—Jordanian subjects, be ruled by Israel, and live in a Palestinian enclave open to Jewish settlement that would be part of neither country and whose exact status would be left to work itself out over the course of time.) In part, too, however, the change clearly stems from his desire to preserve the domestic political option of an "opening to the Right" should his bid to succeed Mrs. Meir as prime minister be stymied, as it shows almost every likelihood of being.

IT MIGHT be deemed curious by some that the Labor party* would be loath to nominate for the prime ministry its most popular figure, a military hero who has proved himself an able political strategist and civilian administrator and whose candidacy would be almost sure to turn out a record Labor vote, but this is merely to show an ignorance of the Byzantine ways of Israeli political life. Political mem-

* The current Israel Labor party is the product of a merger of several social-democratic parties that took place in 1968. The senior partner in the merger, the Israel Workers party or Mapai, had dominated Israeli-Palestinian politics ever since its foundation in 1930, and had controlled each of Israel's coalition governments since 1948.

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ories die hard in Israel, particularly among the veterans of Labor, who remember the sins of their children unto the third and fourth generations. Dayan indeed has several generations of sins to atone for. The first was when, after retiring as chief-of-staff in 1958 and joining the cabinet as minister of agriculture under Ben-Gurion's aegis, he let himself become a rallying-point for Mapai's "young Turks" in a series of futile assaults on the party's entrenched leadership, which included at the time both Sapir and Mrs. Meir. The second was his joining Ben-Gurion as second-in-command of the breakaway Rafi faction, which split with Mapai in 1965 but did poorly in the elections of that year and rejoined the mother party after the Six-Day War. (The formal cause of the traumatic break between Ben-Gurion and the party he had led for three decades was of course that sordid combination of foreign intrigue and domestic scandal known as the Lavon Affair, the repercussions of which led in the end to a factional revolt that pitted Ben-Gurion and a generation of younger politicians, most prominent among them Dayan, against the party whips and bosses who had once been his most ardent supporters. The "revolt" was beaten back by the party bureaucracy, led by Mrs. Meir, Sapir, and the late Levi Eshkol, who was prime minister at the time it broke out, and Ben-Gurion retired from active political life soon after the subsequent elections.) Dayan's third sin was his willingness to be available for the defense ministry in the frantic weeks before the 1967 war, when an opposition front of Rafi, the National Religious party (NRP), and the Free Liberals or Gahal* mounted a powerful campaign to force Levi Eshkol to surrender the post—traditionally in Israel a preserve of the prime minister—as the price for the formation of a wall-to-wall "government of national unity."

It was this *Putsch*, as Eshkol bitterly referred to it to his dying day, that brought Dayan back into national life after the Rafi debacle. Even when he played an instrumental role in leading Rafi back into the merged Labor party in 1968, Dayan continued publicly to declare his intention of deposing the old Mapai machine. Since then he has grown a good deal more circumspect in his dealings with the Labor leadership, and especially with Mrs. Meir, with whom a relationship of grudging mutual respect is said to have been formed, but it is clear that even she has come neither to trust nor to forgive him entirely. In any case, the Labor party learned a clear lesson from its break with Ben-Gurion: the political leader who is too popular in his own right is not one to feel that he needs the party machinery to survive, and is likely, in fact, to turn on it one day and seek to devour it. Hence the further suspicion of Dayan, and the party's clear preference for finance minister Sapir, a backroom politician of unsympathetic mien and a rather comical speech defect who is primarily associated in the public mind with the periodic raising of taxes, hardly a role to inspire affection in the hearts of a populace.

Should Mrs. Meir step down before the November elections, or else wait to resign until she has first guided Labor to its predictable victory at the polls, Dayan will be faced with three options. One is to seek to contest the prime ministership at Labor's nominating convention which will meet to pick Mrs. Meir's successor. As the delegates to this assembly, however, are not chosen in open primaries but through a complicated system of balloting in local clubhouses, labor unions, and other party organs, the terrain for Dayan—the same on which Ben-Gurion was beaten in 1965—would be unfavorable, to say the least. Short of an atmosphere of military crisis such as in 1967, his chances of mustering a majority in his favor would be practically nil. His second option would be to support Sapir or any other Labor candidate that the party might decide on for prime minister in return for a firm commitment that he will be allowed to keep the defense ministry for as long as he wishes. Such an accommodation would have obvious advantages for both sides. For the Labor party it would mean retaining Dayan's talents and popular backing while neutralizing him as a political threat; moreover, should there ever be a showdown with the second Nixon administration over the disposition of the occupied territories, the "doves" in the cabinet would feel far more secure with Dayan there beside them. Dayan, for his part, would be able to avoid a bitter intra-party struggle in which he would not be at his best, and would retain the defense desk with its fiefdom of the occupied territories, whose unique legal status has enabled him to rule over them through a system of personal fiat enjoyed by no other politician in Israel. And yet, an arrangement of this sort might well spell the end of Dayan's prime-ministerial ambitions. He is, after all, in his late fifties already, and although age has rarely proved a detriment in Israeli politics to date, his chances of capturing the party machinery could hardly improve as he grows older.

Dayan's third option would be to bolt the Labor party at the right moment and run on a slate of his own, as did Ben-Gurion in 1965. Any number of scenarios can be imagined for such a move, but in almost all of them the issue of the occupied territories would be sure to play a crucial role. Soon after the 1973 elections, to take one possibility, Dayan might resign his position, declaring that he cannot conscientiously serve under a prime minister like Sapir, of whose policies he

* A parliamentary bloc composed of the right-wing Herut or Freedom party, and the Right-of-Center Liberals.

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thoroughly disapproves. Some time in 1974, after a period of increasingly strained relations with Washington, the government gives in to heavy American pressure and agrees to a deal with Hussein, who is to get back most of the occupied West Bank in return for a peace treaty, Israeli retention of Jerusalem, and minor border alterations elsewhere. A fierce national debate breaks out; the government is dissolved and new elections are scheduled. Dayan joins the Right-of-Center parties in denouncing the proposed agreement and declares his candidacy for office. Of course, he campaigns on other planks too, such as the democratization of Israeli politics, the debureaucratization of government, rationalization of the economy, tax reform, increased social benefits for the poor—in a word, the very program with which the "young Turks" of Mapai, many of whom later went over to Rafi, were identified in the early 60's. But it is the issue of the territories that would give his campaign its dramatic emotional thrust.

Even in the best of circumstances, Dayan could hardly be expected to gain anything like an absolute majority in the Knesset. His strategy would rather have to be geared to winning enough votes to be able to offer himself at the head of a Right-of-Center coalition that would include his own makeshift party, the NRP, Gahal, and one or two small splinter groups. Would such a realignment, without precedent in the history of Israeli politics, be feasible? There is a tendency in Israel to assume that any attempt to challenge the Labor machine is doomed from the start, the prime case in point being the failure in 1965 of Ben-Gurion, certainly a more popular figure at the time than any of his Mapai rivals who humbled him first within the party and then at the polls. The comparison, however, is of dubious value. In the first place, apart from the Lavon Affair, which the public neither cared about nor even understood, Ben-Gurion had no dramatic issue to run on; secondly, unjustifiedly perhaps, the public image he was stuck with in 1965 was that of a cantankerous old man opposed to change and the surrender of power. Finally, because years of personal feuding with the parties of the Right had ruled out in advance any chance of his forming a coalition with them, a vote for Ben-Gurion's Rafi was automatically one for an ineffective and isolated opposition. Statistically, Dayan's chances would have to be reckoned as good. The results of the 1969 elections, for example, show that his potential Right-of-Center allies received some 35 per cent of the total national vote and an equal share of seats in the Knesset. Suppose that running on a ticket of his own he might draw away a third of this vote; he would then need another third of the roughly 50 per cent of the electorate that traditionally votes Labor in order to make such a coalition possible. Half of this total could presumably be counted on to come from the same voters who cast their ballots for Rafi in 1965. In view of Dayan's immense personal appeal, especially if he were running against an unpopular candidate like Sapir, the other half would not be beyond reach.

The effect on Israel of such a development would be little short of revolutionary. Its most immediate result, of course, would be the breaking of the hitherto uninterrupted hegemony over Israeli political life of the Labor bloc, which has governed the country continually since 1948, and indeed, going back to the Jewish *yishuv* of the pre-state era, since the late 20's or early 30's, when it defeated Jabotinsky's Revisionists for control of the Zionist movement. (Perhaps the only other political party in a contemporary democracy that can be compared to Labor in Israel with regard to longevity in power is the Congress party in India, which has achieved its position through a similar combination of controlling a pre-state independence movement almost from its inception, implicating itself in numerous ways in the fabric of a planned, semi-socialist economy, and broadly straddling the political Center so as effectively to isolate both Left and Right and prevent either from mounting a serious political challenge.) No less than the objective upheaval, which would involve a highly complex readjustment of the many interlocking institutions of both Labor and the government, would be the psychological one, whose impact could be expected to be even greater than that caused by Ben-Gurion's final dethronement in 1964-65. At that time the country discovered, not without a sense of relief, that it could live after all without the man who had stood almost continually at its helm since before independence. What most Israelis still do not feel, however, is any sense of confidence that they can survive without Labor. It is precisely this feeling, in fact, that has traditionally been Labor's strongest ally at the polls, and that has helped prevent the development in Israel of a functioning two-party system with its regular and revitalizing alternations of power.

YET once elected to office in so free-wheeling a manner, Dayan might have relatively little freedom of action. The idea is sometimes mooted in Israel, for example, that Dayan as prime minister could deal with the Israeli-Arab conflict as did de Gaulle with the war in Algeria—namely, by backtracking on his own campaign promises and making far-reaching concessions to the other side that no other politician in the country could propose without being pilloried for treason. But apart from the questions of just what concessions might be made, whether Dayan would be personally inclined to make them, and whether anyone on the Arab side would be ready to accept, such a

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course of action seems highly unlikely given the Right-of-Center coalition posited. Even in France, after all, Gaullism as a political technique was only made workable through the overthrow of the Fourth Republic, the consequent shift from a prime-ministerial to a presidential system, and the attainment of a Gaullist majority in parliament, changes whose parallels are hardly thinkable within an Israeli context. Nor does it stand to reason that Dayan, with his open distaste for the give-and-take of parliamentary maneuvering and political horsetrading, could be successful in forging out of the fragmented Israeli Right something approaching the political unity of the Labor bloc. It has been another of Labor's consistent advantages, indeed, that the Right-of-Center parties in Israel have always been hopelessly split against themselves, partly along religious lines (the establishmentarianism of the NRP as opposed to the anti-clericalism of the Liberal faction of Gahal), partly on issues of foreign policy (the hard line of Herut against the softer one of the Liberals), and partly over personalities (particularly that of Herut leader Menahem Beigin, who has frequently been accused by his colleagues of treating the Israeli Right as his own private domain). In short, Dayan at the head of a Right-of-Center coalition might well find himself in a precarious parliamentary position, one that would be conducive neither to his own penchant for personal decision-making nor to the kind of authority that his supporters would expect him to exercise. It could spell disaster from the start.

. . It may be this calculation, far more than any sense of loyalty to Labor itself, that is liable in the end to deter Dayan from bolting the party a second time. Indeed, he has repeatedly stated in recent years that he regards his present association with Labor to be a marriage of convenience that he would not hesitate to break off again if it suited him, an attitude, one gathers from Teveth's book, that has characterized his relationship to nearly every group he has ever been part of. Ironically, the one time in his public life that Dayan allowed a strong sense of fealty to override his tactical sense was when he reluctantly followed Ben-Gurion into Rafi in 1965 despite his conviction that the new list would fail at the polls and had an unpromising political future. It was a decision that nearly cost him his political career, and he is unlikely to go against his better judgment again. If he is the gambler by nature that popular opinion asserts him to be, he is, as Teveth portrays him, a thoroughly professional one who dislikes betting against the odds and has a pronounced aversion to long shots.

Perhaps in the final analysis Dayan's behavior in the future will be a matter of just how badly he wants the prime-ministership, and this is something that apparently even his closest associates do not profess to know. No doubt he prefers it this way; it is part of the mystery—and the mystique. Recently he has been quoted in the Israeli press as hinting that he is not really all that eager for the job; that the defense ministry is challenge enough for him; and that he fears that the task of running a nation of incorrigible civilians like the Israelis would both tire and frustrate him. Perhaps so; yet in view of the fact that in Israel it is generally considered to be in poor taste for a politician to express the desire to be elected to any office at all—it should rather be resignedly accepted as an unavoidable burden imposed either from above or below—such remarks need not be taken too seriously. All in all, it is likely that Dayan will sooner or later be driven to run, as much by his own native ambition as by his barely-concealed disdain for his potential rivals. It may simply not be in his blood to do otherwise. This too, like as not, is the price of being a favorite of Fortune. Such men may indeed gamble coolly, but in the end they are as compulsive as the most hapless hunch-player, and no more likely to get up from the table before either they or the bank have been broken. To walk away with one's winnings, after all, is to admit that one has merely been lucky until now. Dayan will probably not be the first to succeed Mrs. Meir as prime minister, but it seems safe to hazard the guess that we will see him there yet.

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Money, the Job, and Little Women

Ellen Moers

There are so many ways of earning a living and most of them are failures.

—GERTRUDE STEIN, *Ida*

ALL of Jane Austen's opening paragraphs, and the best of her first sentences, have money in them; this may be the first obviously feminine thing about her novels, for money and its making were characteristically female rather than male subjects in English fiction. The wonderfully rude blare that starts *Emma*—"Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich"—is as it happens imitation Mme. de Genlis (the French novelist who meant much to Jane Austen), but the particular Austen touch is precision. While the Genlis heroines, like Richardson's and Fanny Burney's, are merely vaguely, gloriously rich, Emma has precisely 30,000 pounds. From her earliest years, Austen had the kind of mind that inquired where the money came from on which young women were to live, and exactly how much of it there was. In *Love and Freindship* [sic], her classic spoof of the hippie heroine who scorns parental support (written for the ages when Austen herself was fifteen), the money comes from stealing, although Sophia is "most impertinently interrupted" as she is "majestically removing the 5th Bank-note from the Drawer to her own purse."

Marriage makes money a serious business in Austen's fiction; her seriousness about money makes marriage important, as in fact it was in the England of her day. In the last decades of the 18th century and the first of the 19th, England moved from an aristocratic to a middle-class orientation without any of those vulgar revolutions that convulsed the Lesser Nations of the Continent. New people, with new money and new kinds of power, engaged in that remarkable British enterprise of grafting themselves onto the old aristocratic stock, essentially through intermarriage—Austen's subject. A title like *Pride and Prejudice* denotes less of her conformity to the old 18th-century way of thinking in personalized abstractions, than her 19th-century concern with social fact: social class, social values, and money. "It is a truth universally acknowledged," runs the celebrated opening sentence of the novel, "that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." Of all its crystalline phrases, the one about money can least be dispensed with; it conveys the sharp point of Austen's very feminine wit.

Hard facts, with Austen, come first and are swiftly stated. Most of what we need to know about Mr. Bingley, for example, the single man about whom Mrs. Bennet is bursting to tell Mr. Bennet (so that he may get down to the serious business of matchmaking on behalf of their five daughters) is conveyed in her gossipy rattle on the first page of the novel. "Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England." That is, Bingley resides on an estate he has not inherited but merely "taken" or rented, and his wealth comes out of the North, region of industry and commerce; it is new money. This is the point of the whole comedy of snobbery that Austen spins out of Bingley's hateful sisters: "they were of a respectable family in the north of England; a circumstance more deeply impressed on their memories than that their brother's fortune and their own had been acquired by trade."

The Bingley girls are bitterly opposed to their brother's marriage to Jane Bennet, not because of her relative poverty but because of her middle-class connections. For what the family needs is not more wealth but aristocratic shadings to what they have; only land ownership, that sign of old money, can remove the stain of trade. That is why Bingley's sisters are desperate for him to purchase an estate, as their self-made father had intended but "did not live to do." And they have cause to fear that Bingley may have inherited dilatoriness and indecision, as well as a fortune, from their father: "it was doubtful to many of those who best knew the easiness of his temper, whether he might not spend the remainder of his days at Netherfield, and leave the next generation to purchase." Happily for all, marriage to Jane Bennet, and her aversion to remaining in the neighborhood of her vulgar mother, force Bingley at the end of the novel to purchase land himself, in another county.

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Austen placed Bingley and all the other characters of *Pride and Prejudice* on a financial scale arranged with geometric precision. Her hero Darcy is at the top of the scale, with an income of 10,000 pounds a year, and a fortune twice the size of that of his friend Bingley, who has inherited "nearly an hundred thousand pounds" from which he derives an income of four to five thousand. Each of the Bingley sisters has a fortune of 20,000 pounds, or five times the sum that Mrs. Bennet brought in marriage to her husband. Mr. Bennet's income is 2,000 pounds a year, a fifth of Darcy's and somewhat less than half of Bingley's. He should be thought of as a rich man, nonetheless, by the standard provided by what we know of the novelist's own circumstances: the Austens managed with precarious gentility on about 600 pounds a year.

The Bennet family's socioeconomic position is complicated, however, and not only by that business of the entail which, as Mrs. Bennet is too stupid to understand but Jane Austen is not, deprives the children, simply because they are daughters, of a share in their father's estate. Mr. Bennet's fortune is in land, but Mrs. Bennet's is of less respectable provenance. Her father was a country attorney, and her sister, Aunt Phillips (whose indiscretion begins Lydia's ruinous course), married their father's clerk, who took over the law business. Mrs. Bennet's brother Gardiner, the girls' uncle, is a more significant figure in the novel; though kept to the background, he serves to point the moral of Austen's economic design. Mr. Gardiner is first mentioned in a shadowy way as "settled in London in a respectable line of trade"—but these shadows cast a smoky pall over the Bennet girls' prospect for social advancement. The Bingleys and Darcy have heard that their uncle "lives somewhere near Cheapside," revolting name; this alone—something like having relatives in the Bronx—"must very materially lessen their chance of marrying men of any consideration in the world."

When Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner take solider shape in the second half of *Pride and Prejudice*, they turn out to be the most sympathetic adults in the novel, the only ones in fact who combine intelligence, style, character, and fortune; not coincidentally, they are also the only happily married adult pair and the only good parents. The Bingley girls never get over their snobbish difficulty in "believing that a man who lived by trade, and within view of his own warehouses, could have been so well-bred and agreeable," but Darcy conquers both pride and prejudice where Gardiner is concerned.

Darcy himself, Austen's earliest conceived and most glamorous hero, is the least precisely imagined character in the novel. With his Norman name and accompanying ancient credentials (his first name is Fitzwilliam); with his splendid estate complete with ancestral portraits, Darcy is actually an improbable close friend for such as Bingley, and an even less probable catch for Elizabeth Bennet. Austen seems to have lifted Darcy, in all his stiff elegance, from Fanny Burney's *Cecilia*, one of her favorite novels; and he stands alone in her work (she would never do such a character again) as a reminder of her 18th-century formation. Like Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison, Darcy personifies the benefits that stream down, a sort of gilded rainfall, from landed wealth and power when held by a man of high moral character who, past the age and perils of libertinage, marries the right girl.

"How many people's happiness were in his guardianship!" Elizabeth ponders as she tours Pemberley, the Darcy estate. "—How much of pleasure or pain it was in his power to bestow!—how much of good or evil must be done by him!" These are the old ideas about aristocracy of the century of Austen's birth and juvenile reading, ideas emanating from a society securely ruled by a landed aristocracy; but Austen herself belonged to another era, of shifting class values and alignments. The happy ending of *Pride and Prejudice*—Elizabeth's marriage to Darcy—brings together the uppermost and the shabbiest elements of the country gentry, as they were brought together in Austen's own family history. But not part of her family experience, and not, so far as I can tell, part of the stock of ideas she drew from novel-reading, is her original breeding of old Norman blood with new commercial money from Cheapside, which Elizabeth's marriage also represents. Her uncle and aunt Gardiner are revealed finally to be, in Austen's design, the new kind of people whose benevolent power smooths the working of society, and gilds the happy ending comedy guarantees. The last paragraph of *Pride and Prejudice* is given to them:

> With the Gardiners they were always on the most intimate terms. Darcy as well as Elizabeth, really loved them; and they were both ever sensible of the warmest gratitude towards the persons who, by bringing her into Derbyshire, had been the means of uniting them.

"Now I will try to write of something else," Austen wrote in a letter announcing the publication of *Pride and Prejudice* in 1813, "& it shall be a complete change of subject—ordination": that is, the taking of clerical orders, the decisive step by which an Englishman enters upon a life's work in the church. No one has ever been happy with this statement of intention—the only one of such sharpness that Austen wrote down—and few have been able to eke out its application to the novel in question, *Mansfield Park*. In the best criticism of the novel that we have, Lionel Trilling looks seriously at "the ideal of professional commitment" as a moral, a religious, and a cultural

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phenomenon, and what he writes goes far to dignify Austen's intention. But Trilling's ignoring of her concern with the economic aspect of a man's professional choice—to put it bluntly, the question of his income—is, if I may say so, a sign of the masculinity of the critic; it certainly bypasses the essentially feminine quality of Austen's realism.

Because she cared deeply and primarily about young women, because she suffered from a rooted disrespect for parents, especially fathers, because she saw the only act of choice in a woman's life as the making of a marriage upon which alone depended her spiritual and physical health,* Austen turned a severe and serious eye (for here she was rarely satirical) on the economic life of her heroes. Heroes were potential husbands, a momentous role. What I am suggesting is that Austen's realism in the matter of money was in her case an essentially female phenomenon, the result of her deep concern with the quality of a woman's life in marriage.

It may be in point here to mention another woman novelist who seems to me to exhibit the same kind of realism for the same reason, because she was as different as possible from Austen in everything but sex: Harriet Beecher Stowe. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is Austen-like in its precision on money matters (in nothing else), and as much at variance in this regard with the male-written fiction of its day as were Austen's novels. The brilliance of Stowe's attack on slavery was her success in associating it with the cash nexus of mid-century American society. She demonstrated that the true horror of the institution was not its inhumanity but its very human, very easy-going alignment with the normal procedures of the marketplace.

Those who know Stowe's novel only by reputation will be surprised by the level and domestic tone of its first chapter, one of the most important in the book. There Tom is sold to trader Haley, because he "will bring the highest sum," over the dinner table of Mr. and Mrs. Shelby, a pleasant, respectable Kentucky couple whose treatment of their slaves is remarkably civilized. Mr. Shelby is not at all a vicious man but an ordinary husband, who, unbeknownst to his wife, has gone seriously into debt. He must raise money quickly to pay for the amenities of their plantation establishment, amenities which include Mrs. Shelby's piety, her high moral code, her tender care of her slaves. Stowe's point is that Mrs. Shelby's genteel ignorance of the financial realities of her married life is, just as much as the sinister trade that Haley plies, a cause of the perpetuation of slavery. "How can I bear," the woman cries when she learns the truth of Tom's sale, "to have this open acknowledgment that we care for no tie, no duty, no relation, however sacred, compared with money?" But that is just the lesson Stowe wanted her readers, in both North and South, to carry away from *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* which she pointedly addressed to "the mothers of America."

Jane Austen, a spinster, was harsher on unmarried girls who, for good or evil reasons, ignore financial realities, than on those who think of nothing else. Mary Crawford, in *Mansfield Park,* is particularly disagreeable when she expresses astonishment that Edmund Bertram is to be a clergyman: "there is generally an uncle or a grandfather to leave a fortune to the second son." "A very praiseworthy practise," Edmund replies, "but not quite universal. I am one of the exceptions, and *being* one, must do something for myself."

Doing something for oneself, economically speaking, is hard for Edmund and Miss Crawford to conceive; it was also hard for Jane Austen. To the genteel classes of her time, a man should ideally be something and have something, but not *do* anything in order to be or to have. The point of Edmund's taking orders is in fact to place him in a position for someone to give him *a living,* that special British term familiar to readers of Austen and Trollope, signifying a clergyman's benefice; at once the sphere of his responsibility and the attached means of his livelihood, his income. A *living* was something one inherited, was given, took, or bequeathed, according to ancient and complicated systems of secular and clerical ownership of the land; the familiar modern phrase, *to make a living,* may have been, for all I know, in origin an Americanism. (The idiom was clearly well-established in mid-century America. "I never thought on 't," says trader Haley of the rights and wrongs of Slavery. ". . . I took up the trade just to make a living; if 't an't right, I calculate to 'pent on 't in time, *ye* know.")

EVEN today the Oxford English Dictionary takes as little notice of *to make a living* as it does of the word *job,* in the current sense of a man's major, daily, serious employment. I am not suggesting that Jane Austen concerned herself with Edmund Bertram's getting, holding, or executing anything that could remotely be called a job; that subject waited on the significantly later generation of Charlotte Brontë. But I think we must take seriously her intention to write in *Mansfield Park,* however unsuccessfully, a book about a man's practical and active choice of his life's

* The thought that a respectable woman might earn her own living never crossed Austen's mind except to fill it with revulsion. No more violent antipathy to the idea of woman's work can be found in English fiction than in Jane Fairfax's outburst in *Emma* against "governess-trade"—so-called in invidious comparison to the slave trade—until George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss,* where the heroine prefers prolonging an illicit flirtation to taking up the reviled work of schoolteaching.

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work, and the role that women play in that choice. I think we must believe in her concern here with man's field.

Certainly the subject dominates, and far more brilliantly and successfully, her next published novel, *Emma*. Mr. Knightley, her finest male character, is more than the hero of the novel, more than the man Emma marries; he represents, as his name intentionally does, Austen's ripe thinking on the ideal of English manhood. Mr. Knightley has no elegance, hardly any surface, though he has great wealth in the form of ownership of vast and ancient lands—the sole form, for he is short of the cash which marriage to Emma is to provide. But the quality of the man lies not in his mere "possession of a good fortune," but in his active work to preserve it. For, in his rough gaiters and long stride, his loud forthright voice, his industrious outdoor life, and his interminable colloquies indoors, to Emma's irritation, on crops and prices, Mr. Knightley is and is proud to be a working farmer. Only as such has he been able to preserve in fruitful prosperity and ever-widening extent the beautiful green and spreading lands of his estate. Austen calls it Donwell Abbey to underline her view of Mr. Knightley as the English Knight who has Done Well.

Mr. Knightley is an unusual male character in Austen, not only in his responsible discharge of the landlord's obligations to his society, but also in his free and unencumbered possession of the land: no living parent to await the death of, no indigent brothers or sisters to support, no distant relative to truckle to. More typical, and closer to the reality Austen knew, in her own family, is Frank Churchill in the same novel, who cuts himself off from his amiable father Captain Weston, dropping even his name, in order to attach himself to his maternal relations, the hateful but rich and childless Churchills. What is a man to do, what can a man do in Austen's world? Austen seems strongly to have disapproved a man's establishing himself by marriage to an heiress, but she appears not to have been much troubled by the scramble after patronage. Any amount of servility, embarrassment, and dependence within the family circle seems in her novels to be worth the hero's prize: to end "in possession of a good fortune."

That Frank Churchill or Henry Tilney or Edward Ferrars (the last two, the heroes of *Northanger Abbey* and *Sense and Sensibility*) should defy domestic tyranny, strike out on their own, and take a job seems beyond Austen's imagining. So rare indeed is the subject in 19th-century English fiction generations after Austen that one might think—what is not true—that job-holding simply did not exist as a viable possibility for the middle classes: that is, hiring one's services out for money, performing set tasks during fixed hours, surrendering control of the major share of one's waking hours to an employer, in return for the means of existence. The shadow of Great Expectations, long after the idea had become a myth, blackened out for even Victorian novelists the subject of the job.*

Most of Austen's young men follow a profession, that uncertain midpath between servile dependence and independent industry, for success in all the professions in Austen's day (and even in our own) rested to a degree on access to patronage; for example, that "living" in the church, in the gift of family or near acquaintance. The army was in the same sense a profession: witness Darcy's purchase of a commission for Wickham, which raises him in social class and readies him for marriage to an heiress.

Medicine was not then a middle-class profession; when it became one, later in the century, George Eliot wrote her brilliantly original study of the professional man as Lydgate in *Middlemarch*. And the law, for a rootedly country novelist like Austen, was a profession only when performed mysteriously in far-off London by someone like John Knightley. Geographical limitations also deprived Austen of the subject of politics and place-hunting. That she had heard of the new class of commercial entrepreneur, and was inclined to admire it, we know from her sketch of Mr. Gardiner in *Pride and Prejudice*, but she was prevented by ignorance from showing anything of the working life of a man engaged in industry, manufacture, commerce, business—all summed up, by 19th-century England, as "trade." Austen does however provide a good deal of information about independent industry, risk-taking, and financial success in the navy, the profession she knew best; it claimed two of her brothers, who rose to be admirals.

THE navy and trade might seem worlds apart; *Persuasion* tells us otherwise. The last and most unguarded of her

* Dickens is a case in point. He himself began his adult life with a job: he was employed by a newspaper as a parliamentary reporter, expert in shorthand. But this matter does not enter into his self-portrait as David Copperfield, who moves from a professional apprenticeship in the law direct to triumphs as an independent author.

Trollope worked most of his life as a clerk in the Postal Service, but his dozens of novels deal with the patronage-ridden professions of the church and the law, with politics and inherited wealth, not with the Civil Service. Johnny Eames, Trollope's one attempt to "do" the small clerk (*The Last Chronicle of Barset, The Small House at Allington*) is among those male characters who justify Bradford Booth's comment that "too many of Trollope's heroes [are] indefatigably concerned with who is going to give him some money"—as someone does for Johnny at the last.

Thackeray, who was unusually honest about his own fall from genteel status, tried in *Pendennis* to capture something of the working life of the hack writer he had been himself, from necessity. But posterity better remembers the comic brilliance of the chapters of *Vanity Fair* in which Thackeray wrote of Living on Nothing a Year.

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novels, *Persuasion* begins with the driving of Sir Walter Elliot from his beautiful ancestral estate, for he is a merely ornamental snob who provides neither benevolent leadership nor sound economic management for the county of which he is a principal landowner. Sir Walter's improvidence makes residence at Kellynch impossible and rental necessary to Admiral Crofts and his wife: simple, unfashionable navy people of sterling worth and patriotic utility, but no refinement, who represent Austen's final ideal.

To Sir Walter, who is stupid, nasty, and wrong, the naval career is "offensive," for it is "the means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction, and raising men to honours which their fathers and grandfathers never dreamt of." Austen's own view, as presented by her heroine Anne, is otherwise: "she could not but in conscience feel that they were gone who deserved not to stay, and that Kellynch Hall had passed into better hands than its owners." Only when one considers that Kellynch is Anne's own home, and its dispossessed owner her father, can one gauge the measure of Austen's revulsion against the idle and worthless landlord, and of her admiration for "new people" in the navy. But then *Persuasion* is entirely, as the other Austen novels are only partly, the story of a daughter's moral, emotional, and socioeconomic rejection of her own family.

Austen's account of the naval profession, from which Anne Elliot at last takes a husband, includes little about danger and war (though the navy she knew defeated Napoleon under Nelson) but a great deal about the possibilities it offers of middle-class domestic felicity and middle-class economic success. The plot of *Persuasion* hinges on the economic fact that capture of an enemy vessel, a "prize" in naval parlance, meant direct financial reward to the naval captain of Austen's day. It is the foundation of Captain Wentworth's self-made success. Anne Elliot had been persuaded not to accept Wentworth as a suitor, because, though a fine and intelligent young man, he had "nothing but himself to recommend him, and no hopes of attaining affluence, but in the chances of a most uncertain profession." Anne follows at a distance Wentworth's rise to Captain in the navy: he "must now, by successive captures, have made a handsome fortune. She had only navy lists and newspapers for her authority, but she could not doubt his being rich."

The great names of Trafalgar and St. Domingo echo in the background of *Persuasion,* but what one hears in the foreground is naval reminiscence perhaps only a woman novelist would write, for it is full of money rather than glory. "Ah, those were pleasent days when I had the *Laconia,*" sighs Captain Wentworth. "How fast I made money in her! A friend of mine and I had such a lovely cruise together off the Western Islands. Poor Harville, sister! You know how much he wanted money; worse than myself. He had a wife. Excellent fellow!"

AUSTEN was by temperament a realist, Charlotte Brontë by nature a romantic of passionate strain, who remained all her life in awe of the call of her own imagination, both to genius and to madness. When Brontë wrote as a realist, therefore, it was with deliberation and from conviction. Thus it was as a Christian, as a modern (i.e., a Victorian), as a native of industrial Yorkshire, as an adult (a status painfully won by the children of her family), and finally as a woman that she committed herself to the sober portrayal of the realities of everyday modern life at the outset of her career as a novelist. The results were interestingly original. "I had adopted a set of principles," she later wrote of her first novel. "I said to myself that my hero should work his way through life as I had seen real living men work theirs—that he should never get a shilling he had not earned—. . . that whatever small competency he might gain, should be won by the sweat of his brow. . . ."

She held so firmly to these principles, and discharged so scrupulously her portrait of a man with a job—a middle-class man working routinely for a living—that no one would publish the book. "Indeed," she added drily, "until an author has tried to dispose of a manuscript of this kind, he can never know what stores of romance and sensibility lie hidden in breasts he would not have suspected of casketing such treasures. Men in business are usually thought to prefer the real" —but publishers, she had found, harbor a "passionate preference for the wild, wonderful, and thrilling." The latter preference a Brontë could easily satisfy; and so, against her principles, but forced by commercial necessity as well as inclination, she wrote her second novel, the romance called *Jane Eyre,* and thus entered history.

Charlotte Brontë's first novel, *The Professor,* was published only after her death, and barely entered history at all except as a literary curiosity to those concerned with the development of the Brontë masterpiece *Villette,* which deals wholly, as *The Professor* deals in part, with Charlotte Brontë's experience as teacher in a Brussels school. In *Villette,* her last novel, Brontë provides one of the best literary accounts ever written of what it is like to face a classroom of the disagreeable, stupid, and intractable young. But her first novel, especially the opening six chapters, has an interest of its own, for *The Professor* is truly the sober, unromantic story of a man intended as a hero, and as at least the social equal of his readers, who works for a living. I do not know any previous work of English fiction carried out upon such principles.

William Crimsworth is well-born and well-

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educated but penniless, and driven by various necessities to forget family patronage and consider "engaging in trade." He works as second clerk in a textile manufacturing establishment in ——shire, charged with translating and copying the firm's foreign correspondence. (Clerk then meant secretary, man's work before the late-Victorian invention of the typewriter, and the ensuing opening of office employment to women.) No exciting incident, no upsweep of fortune, no romance, no amusement other than reading and walking, and very few social encounters break the routine of his office life. He lives on his meager salary in lodgings, a rented bedroom where the sluttish servant regularly lets the fire go out. The interest of the opening chapters is the peculiar atmosphere Brontë evokes—a kind of sooty, acrid, coldness—and the peculiar character of her hero. For sensibility, refinement, youth, and individuality, the qualities with which her hero is endowed at birth, are swallowed up by the character of the job-holder.

Crimsworth is dry, bitter, and taciturn. He is punctual, diligent, tidy in his work, austere and thrifty in habit. He is obsessed with neatness, and a teetotaler who drinks a good deal of coffee as well as tea in the novel. In appearance he is "only a counting-house clerk, in a grey tweed wrapper." He likes to look at women, but has strong views about what might be called the "single standard." When threatened with violence by his insufferable employer, he threatens in return merely to summon the magistrate. Altogether, Crimsworth has a very good hold on his passions and his imagination—something which distinguishes him from the Brontë heroines.

Crimsworth hates his job, in fact hates working. His refusal to romanticize his employment is one of the more original touches in the character. And when a fight with his employer ends the job, and throws Crimsworth loose in the wide world, he reacts very differently from Jane Eyre or Lucy Snowe (of *Villette*): they revel in being free spirits, they dream of independence and mysteriously new experience, while Crimsworth grimly faces the fact of job-hunting. "I, a bondsman just released from the yoke, freed for one week from twenty-one years of constraint, must, of necessity, resume the fetters of dependency. Hardly had I tasted the delight of being without a master when duty issued her stern mandate: 'Go forth and seek another service.'" Subservience and self-denial are here the essentials of the white-collar working character. Whatever the defects of *The Professor*—whatever its conscious drabness of atmosphere, which I for one like to savor—the novel does not belong to the self-improving, success-worshiping genre of popular fiction.

The only burst of enthusiasm for work in itself that Brontë permits herself is, interestingly enough, in her delineation of the happy marriage that ends the novel. For an essential ingredient in its happiness is the working wife: it is she (a lace-mender turned schoolteacher) who craves employment for its own sake, she who finds fulfillment in work for pay. Crimsworth accedes to his wife's need, though at the end his income, amassed through school-managing and careful investing, makes her earnings a spiritual rather than an economic necessity.

> I put no obstacle in her way; raised no objection; I knew she was not one who could live quiescent and inactive, or even comparatively inactive. Duties she must have to fulfil, and important duties; work to do—and exciting, absorbing, profitable work; strong faculties stirred in her frame, and they demanded full nourishment, free exercise; mine was not the hand ever to starve or cramp them. . . .

Here and throughout the elaboration in the last chapters of *The Professor* of the ideal of work for married women—something of a landmark in that area, I imagine, for 1846—Brontë lets down her guard and reveals herself a woman novelist, whistling in the Victorian dark.

CHARLOTTE Brontë's most important propaganda for work for women makes a strong feature of *Shirley*, the ambitious, brilliant, and also seriously flawed novel set in industrial Yorkshire that she wrote after *Jane Eyre*, with conscious intention to bridle the latter's melodrama and dampen its romance. These violent alternations between romance and realism mark all of her published work and fill her most interesting correspondence, where she argued more fully than any other English Victorian novelist the debate between Romanticism and Realism, not in the theoretical Continental manner, but in a practical, and very feminine style. The issue of working for a living was always present in her thinking about the literary real. "If you think . . . that anything like a romance is preparing for you, reader," she writes in the celebrated introduction to *Shirley*, "you never were more mistaken. Do you anticipate sentiment, and poetry, and reverie? Do you expect passion, and stimulus, and melodrama? Calm your expectations; reduce them to a lowly standard. Something real, cool, and solid lies before you; something unromantic as Monday morning, when all who have work wake with the consciousness that they must rise and betake themselves thereto."

Most of what made up popular knowledge of Victorian commerce and industry—for all that they were dominant features of the age—came from the writings of women novelists: Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, Frances Trollope, Geraldine Jewsbury, Charlotte Tonna, and Har-

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riet Martineau.* C. P. Snow must have forgotten all about the Victorian women writers when, in *The Two Cultures,* he denounced literary intellectuals as "natural Luddites" who always, starting in the Victorian age, turned their back on the Industrial Revolution. Oddly enough, Snow chose button-making as his example of the kind of productive process of which he said intellectuals have always been obdurately ignorant. He thus passed over Harriet Martineau's article, "What There Is in a Button," which gave readers of *Household Words* a very full account indeed of the production of metal, pearl, needle-wrought, engraved, and cloth-covered buttons, as it was carried on in Birmingham in 1852. Miss Martineau wrote it as part of a highly successful series she did for Dickens's periodical. She also covered the production of nails, needles, textiles, screws, matches, and glass.

Harriet Martineau, like Charlotte Brontë and most of the women writers I have named for their commitment to commercial realities, was a native of the industrial North. But most of these women, too, were daughters, wives, or sisters of clergymen, the one class that worked hardest on Sunday, and rested the following morning. Their gift of Monday realism to Victorian literature was the result of conscious deliberation bred from feminine experience; and in these degenerate times the gift looks particularly precious. Women again, perhaps, may see to its renewal. The one recent novel of quality that I have read which presents the ultimate rewards of a man's life as deriving from his working days and not his sexual nights is by a woman. It is a book positively obsessed with the idea of the job and, in probably unconscious tribute to an old female tradition, it is called *The Monday Voices.*†

The homely, unendowed spinster in Victorian England knew she had to work to live respectably, and, unlike her male counterpart, she could indulge no "great expectations" of something other than a job turning up. The realistic choice forced upon such women was that between paid employment and unpaid domestic servitude. That the intelligent Victorian woman should prefer the former for herself is no surprise, and hardly a new story; what is interesting, and what has rarely been commented upon, is that the enforced realism of her life led the woman writer to a commitment to the job, to paid employment, for everyone, man and woman alike. This is the original contribution of *The Professor,* which celebrates the job as a reality, not as an ideal, and expounds Charlotte Brontë's belief that a man without inherited wealth has to work to live—which sounds like, but is not at all like, Margaret Fuller's notorious acceptance of the universe. For Brontë had before her eyes an example of the reverse of her kind of feminine realism in the person of her brother Branwell. His unemployment, as much as her own and her sisters' employment, was the source of *The Professor.*

She was living at home when Branwell returned in disgrace to the Haworth parsonage to begin the long ordeal of self-pitying dissipation that ended in his death three years later. Frustrated in his great, unfounded expectations of literary, artistic, and marital glory, Branwell was a drunkard and a drug-addict. His threats of suicide, arson, and murder were so genuine and unremitting that he required constant surveillance in that tiny household, when Charlotte began to write *The Professor.* "Branwell stays at home and degenerates instead of improving," she wrote. "He refuses to make an effort; he will not work—and at home he is a drain on every resource—an impediment to all happiness."

Branwell's Byronic outbursts in the role of social outcast and vindictive failure were also closely observed by his sister Emily, who was also writing her first novel at the same time. But Emily's attitude to her brother was one of tolerant fascination, even fellow-feeling, and her genius had nothing whatsoever to do with Monday-morning realism. As different as one sister was from the other, so different is *The Professor* from *Wuthering Heights,* but both are in their way strikingly original productions. It would be inaccurate to take as an easy commonplace, and to miss the fervent and feminine conviction in what Charlotte Brontë wrote, long after *The Professor,* about "earning one's subsistence." "Most desirable," she said, "is that all, both men and women, should have the power and the will to work for themselves—most advisable that both sons and daughters should early be inured to habits of independence and industry."

HABITS of independence and industry were bred in the American bone, religion, history, and continental destiny all conducing to a native faith in hard work as the practical foundation of personal worth. Nothing so clearly separates American writers of the 19th century from their English contemporaries than their attitude toward work—and here, as in so much else, the Americans seem beside the English at once childishly naive and wearily sophisticated, at once behind and ahead of the times. For by mid-century, American "literary intellec-

* The one important male novelist associated with the so-called "factory novel" was Benjamin Disraeli, exceptional in many ways. In a later generation, this particular feminine tradition was continued by George Eliot's *Felix Holt, a Radical,* and, in America, by Rebecca Harding Davis's *Life in the Iron Mills,* which has just been reprinted by the Feminist Press with an introduction by Tillie Olsen.

† By Joanne Greenberg (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965). Under the name of Hannah Green, she wrote the better known *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden,* also a title, as it is a novel, of feminine realism.

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tuals," to use Snow's phrase, were sick of the work ethic and disgusted with moneymaking. While Charlotte Brontë was writing *The Professor,* and nervously exploring the new subject of genteel man at work for his living, Henry David Thoreau was living at Walden Pond, to which he moved on the 4th of July, 1845, to declare his independence of his hard-working, moneymaking Concord neighbors. "I am convinced," Thoreau wrote, "that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely. . . . It is not necessary that a man should earn his living by the sweat of his brow, unless he sweats easier than I do."

Transcendental improvidence we now know to have been a source of much literary industry on the part of American women. The father, brother, or husband who could not or would not work, and left the entire or major support of a large household to their womenfolk (Harriet Beecher Stowe had seven babies) was responsible for the writing of many best sellers by American women, and a few masterworks. Thoreau of course never married; it was a maiden aunt of his who paid those taxes in defiant nonpayment of which he went to jail in "civil disobedience." Not Thoreau, but his Concord neighbor and friend, Bronson Alcott, made literary history—female literary history—for Alcott, the most improvident of all transcendental philosophers, had a daughter to support him named Louisa May, who wrote forty books to that end in about thirty years.

Beside *Little Women,* she wrote dozens of "juveniles," many thrillers, and a few books intended in all seriousness for adult readers. In the last category, the one I have read that strikes me as most interesting is her first long fiction. She began to work on it only fifteen years after Charlotte Brontë wrote *The Professor,* but, for reasons similar to those that hindered publication of Brontë's first novel, it was not published till long afterward, in 1873. It is called *Work: A Story of Experience,* and it opens with a reference to American Independence very different from any to be found in *Walden*:

> "Aunt Betsey, there's going to be a new Declaration of Independence."
>
> "Bless and save us, what do you mean, child?"
>
> "I mean that, being of age, I'm going to take care of myself, and not be a burden any longer. . . . I don't intend to wait . . . but, like the people in fairy tales, travel away into the world and seek my fortune. . . . I'm old enough to take care of myself; and if I'd been a boy, I should have been told to do it long ago."

Under the jaunty tone, which came naturally to Alcott (it is all over her journals as well as her juvenile fiction), the author is quite in earnest. She wrote *Work* mainly about and primarily for women. The hero is a girl named Christie, closely modeled after Alcott herself, who goes jauntily out into the world to make what turns out to be a very scanty fortune. Too poorly educated to be a governess, she goes to a Boston employment agency to apply for a job as a housemaid. "I'll begin at the beginning, and work my way up. I'll put my pride in my pocket, and go out to service. Housework I like, and can do well. . . . I never thought it degradation to do it for [Aunt Betsey], so why should I mind doing it for others if they pay for it? It isn't what I want, but it's better than idleness, so I'll try it!" And a live-in housemaid she becomes, in cap and apron, at $2.50 a week, in an establishment where the cook, soon Christie's fast friend, is black.

All this is quite extraordinary for an American or English girl of Christie's type in the 1860's. Like everything else in *Work*—sewing for pay, or working as an actress—it was based on Alcott's real experience, but that did not make it less out of the run of normal American experience. Louisa May Alcott was of the Brahmin class, her father from a good if decayed old New England family, her mother a member of the distinguished, prosperous Boston clan of the Mays, the source, as few people realize, of Alcott's lifelong snobbery, as well as her middle name. The March girls in *Little Women* are presumably month-named for the same reason.

A special gift Alcott had as a writer, and which accounts, I think, for much of her distinctive charm, was her ability to see her own experience—her weird father, her poverty-line childhood, the strange Concord ambience, her unique working life—as the sunshiny norm, which it was not, and in so doing to transform what she knew into a practical ideal. One result is the curious modernity of Alcott's fiction. It is hard to believe, when reading *Little Women,* that it was written in the 1860's, while Dickens and George Eliot were still writing; that the War which conveniently abstracts the father from the female household of *Little Women* (and even more conveniently kills off Christie's husband in *Work*) is the contemporary Civil War. For the working girls in Alcott, Jo or Meg or Christie, seem more like the American college girl of today, working at pickup jobs without loss of respectability or class status, than like the Jane Eyres and Lucy Snowes who were their nearer contemporaries.

In all of Alcott's books that I have read, the kind of work she describes with most conviction, with most imaginative and moral zeal, is humble work, lower in intellectual content and social status than the family atmosphere that produces her girls. *Hospital Sketches,* the first of her published books to capture the public's serious attention, deals with her service as a nurse—unskilled, ill-fed, backbreaking service under the

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worst conditions—in a Washington hospital during the Civil War. Meg works as a governess in *Little Women*, Amy as a companion; Jo does childcare and sewing for the mistress of a New York boarding house. All the girls are unfitted for the work they do and dislike doing it as much as they dislike the housework—cooking, sewing, cleaning—that, just as much as games, romances and dreams, makes up the texture of a girl's life in *Little Women*. Work is handled playfully in the novel, but it is not confused with play. It is something real, lasting, serious, necessary, and inescapable as Monday morning, to be shouldered manfully—by women, little and big. In fact, the importance of work in America's favorite girl-child's classic is worth pondering. A very different message, for boys, can be found in *Tom Sawyer*, published in the following decade. There work is presented as something to be avoided at all costs and with all ingenuity, whether through the swindle, the ruse, or flight.

To move from *Work* and *Little Women* to *La Condition Ouvrière* is to pass through mind-reeling distances of place and time, and yet to remain, I think, within a solid feminine tradition. For Simone Weil's book, often called the most profound writing produced by this century about the working condition, issued from a woman's desire to make contact with real life. That was Weil's motive, she wrote, for taking off a year (1935) from her normal career of philosophy teacher in a French lycée to work on the Renault assembly-line. Alcott, Brontë, and the rest would have understood her pride in the moral self-sufficiency she derived from the experience; she learned, she wrote, to accept perpetual humiliation without becoming humiliated in her own eyes. The feminine issues in *La Condition Ouvrière* are particularly clear in Weil's original language, where the play of genders sharpens her expressed resolve to stick with factory work until she could learn to support it in a way that conserved her dignity as a human being (*"Je me suis juré de ne pas sortir de cette condition d'ouvrière avant d'avoir appris à la supporter de manière à y conserver intact le sentiment de ma dignité d'être humain"*).

Simone Weil was a Jew drawn to Catholicism, a Marxist opponent of Marxism, a religious philosopher who was both a mystic and an analyst of the working class, and a sophisticated French modernist. Louisa May Alcott was a daughter of 19th-century New England transcendentalism, who wrote books for children. Yet their sense of the real world as a working world was in some ways the same, and in different ways equally religious. The fairy tale which underlies Alcott's *Work* is *The Pilgrim's Progress*, most revered of Puritan fantasies, and it makes a structure far too solid for Alcott's unpretentious tale of a middle-class girl who waits on table, runs after children, and sews seams for her livelihood. Yet there is something impressive, too, about Alcott's naive attempt to make a latter-day Christian, a pilgrim on the dangerous journey to the desired country, out of her little Christie, the working girl.

There is also an interest to Alcott's salute to a special kind of women's solidarity, with which she brings Christie's pilgrimage to a close. Widowed almost immediately after marriage, the mother of a little girl, Christie at forty is wealthy but occupied. She goes among working women to shake their hands ("roughened by the needle, stained with printer's ink, or hard with humbler toil") and arouse their enthusiasm for "the new emancipation" with the sort of simple, earnest speech that only she among the feminists can make, "for I have been and mean to be a working-woman all my life." The novel ends with a scene of hand-clasping all around the table, charmingly illustrated in the Victorian edition I have: Mrs. Wilkins the fat motherly laundress, Bella the elegant young society matron, Letty the fallen woman, Hepsey the black cook, Mrs. Powers the elderly Quaker lady, Christie, and her daughter Ruth—who "spread her chubby hand above the rest: a hopeful omen, seeming to promise that the coming generation of women will not only receive but deserve their liberty, by learning that the greatest of God's gifts to us is the privilege of sharing His great work."

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The Cold War According to Kennan

Adam B. Ulam

In August 1950 George F. Kennan went on indefinite leave from the State Department. His decision to do so seemed on the face of it inexplicable; only forty-six at the time, he was widely recognized as one of the chief architects of U.S. foreign policy and was obviously slated for a brilliant diplomatic preferment. But as he wrote then in explanation of his decision, "Never has there been such utter confusion in the public mind with respect to U.S. foreign policy. The President does not understand it; Congress does not understand it; nor does the public; nor does the press." And so Mr. Kennan felt that no one in his position could contribute much "unless he first turns historian, earns public confidence and respect through the study of an earlier day, and then gradually carries the public up to a clear and comprehensive view of the occurrences of these recent years."*

It was a rather impulsive statement (was public confusion over American foreign policy any greater in 1950 than it had been in 1945 or 1940 or 1920?) combined with a rather startling ambition: when have the American people, or any other, ever taken *political* lessons from a historian? Now, more than twenty years later, Mr. Kennan is no longer confident of the possibility of carrying the public "up to a clear and comprehensive view of the occurrences of . . . recent years." The second volume of his *Memoirs*, just published,† closes on a wistful note: ". . . One can do but little and it (often) takes a lifetime to accomplish that little bit." By the same token, however, his assessment of the period preceding his first departure from the State Department is much more favorable now than it once was: far from being a time of "utter confusion," the years between 1945 and 1949 seem to him to have marked a unique moment, "when the conduct of America's peacetime diplomacy may be said to have had its own integrity as purely an exercise in foreign policy." In Mr. Kennan's present view, this bright period ended "with the election of Harry Truman to the Presidency in his own right in 1948. With this development, the vultures of domestic politics swarmed back onto the scene. . . ." (He himself, Mr. Kennan avows, has always tended "to a total disregard for the American domestic political process" with its "turgid stirrings." He contrasts it to the function of career diplomacy, "a matter of duty, dedication, reason, and integrity.")

Now, quite apart from the quality of mind sentiments like these reveal, Mr. Kennan's account raises some very important questions of substance. Is it, for instance, really true that the decline in the integrity and skill with which American policies have been conducted in the last twenty years is attributable to the hurly-burly of democratic politics, and to the incapacity of the American democratic system to think and reflect? On this question we might summon as witness Mr. Kennan himself. In his first volume of memoirs Mr. Kennan rendered their due to the vigor and imagination of such initiatives as the Marshall Plan and to that remarkable group of public servants—General Marshall, Robert Lovett, and John McCloy—who conceived those policies and "sold" them to the American people (of course his own name belongs in this company). But his critique of the period as a whole bore a startling resemblance to that which he now addresses to the subsequent period. Policies otherwise desirable, he wrote, were dressed in extravagant and damaging rhetoric: the Truman Doctrine, for example, succumbed to, and hence encouraged, the harmful American tendency "to seek universal formulae or doctrines in which to clothe and justify particular actions." Mr. Kennan now believes that the main source of error in U.S. foreign policy since 1949-50 has been the exaggerated fear of what Russia might do militarily; this fear has led to overreaction in the form of an overemphasis on weapons, military alliances, and foreign bases. But the same thing, and by his own account, can be said of the allegedly halcyon period before 1950, when such fears (then much more "realistic" than now), were professed not

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* George F. Kennan, *Memoirs 1925-1950*, Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1967.

† Atlantic-Little, Brown, 368 pp., $12.50.

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only or mainly by the "vultures of domestic politics," but by the people whom Kennan justifiably respected then, like Secretary Forrestal and General Clay.

WHAT, then, did change about 1950? We must grant Mr. Kennan that domestic pressures on foreign policy increased. But to fix the blame on the anti-Communist hysteria fanned and seized upon by those famous "vultures," is simply inaccurate. By 1950 the American people, not unlike Mr. Kennan himself, had become exasperated by the apparent intractability of the Soviet problem, and their exasperation was well-founded. Within the space of a few short years Americans had been called upon, not once but several times, to make drastic readjustments in their thinking on international affairs. The image of the Soviet Union had gone from that of an ally—regarded, by our *official* propaganda, as a peace-loving democracy—to that of chief enemy, requiring a peacetime political commitment by the United States unprecedented in its annals. Throughout this change and on all the intermediate steps along the way, the American politician—Mr. Kennan's *bête noire*—had done his best to keep up with the foreign-policy experts, voting one after another for all those treaties and billion-dollar programs which the government told him were necessary to "do the job."

By 1949-50 it was clear that the formulas and programs had failed to resolve the problem. It is easy to see *now* that we should not have gotten so exercised about it; we now know that the Soviets had no intention of marching into Western Europe, that after the war they had demobilized to almost the degree that we had. But how could we have been sure then? Statesmen as well as simple folk were impressed by the fact that even before they developed the atom bomb the Russians had instituted the Berlin blockade. What might they do once they possessed a stock of nuclear weapons? How could the doctrine of containment be said to be working if since its enunciation the world's most populous nation had passed under Communist rule? We know now, and perhaps should have guessed then, that Communist China would present a greater problem to Russia than to the United States, but at the time Mao and his colleagues were certainly hard at work creating the opposite impression. People also believed—and although the argument has become unfashionable it has not entirely lost validity—that the passing of any country under the sway of Communism represented a setback both to the cause of liberty and to the interests of the United States. Finally, to top it all, came the invasion of South Korea.

In those years Americans had learned to feel guilty for their past indifference to events in Manchuria, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland—countries which in most cases could not be described as having been ruled democratically. Surely it is unreasonable to demand that in 1949-50 they should *not* have become apprehensive over what was going on in the world. What is surprising, and actually redounds to the credit of American democracy, is that the anti-Communist hysteria did not turn into a veritable St. Vitus's dance, that the real vultures who fed upon people's fears and anxieties were few in number and their influence on the public mind short-lived, that the call for a preventive war against Russia came from but a single air-force general who was promptly relieved of his command. One might have wished for a more rational and balanced attitude on the part of the American people, and the McCarthy episode remains one of the most shameful in our history, but in retrospect it is amazing how well democratic institutions that had been devised in and for another age withstood the brutal pressures of the time.

Mr. Kennan's perspective on the events of 1949-53 is affected by his participation in our more recent national unhappiness over foreign policy. But his anguish in the summer of 1950 and later was also personal and professional. As a diplomat he believes, quite rightly, that negotiation, the devising of stratagems and formulas designed to prevent the resort to arms, is the stuff of international life. As to all civilized men, not only actual violence but the rationalization of violence is distasteful to him. In the period after 1949, in addition to the unwelcome intrusion of domestic politics into foreign policy, he discerned an increasing and deeply depressing reliance on weapons, military alliances, bases, and the like. During his unhappy tenure as ambassador in Moscow, Mr. Kennan's apprehensions crystallized into concern over "the recklessness—the willingness to subordinate everything to military considerations—that appeared to inspire official Washington." Both in the last two or three years of Truman's Presidency and during John Foster Dulles's regime at State, Mr. Kennan detected a "militarization of policy toward the Soviet Union." The diplomat in him was offended not only by bomb-rattling, but by irresponsible Congressional pranks like the Captive Nations Resolution of 1959 "committing" the U.S. to the liberation of twenty-two nations from Communist tyranny.

The task of statesmanship should be to conjure away the danger of war; skillful diplomacy should obviate the need for military commitments. These are incontrovertible premises. But in pursuing the line of argument that proceeds from them, Mr. Kennan finds himself ultimately in surprising proximity to the so-called revisionist thesis concerning the origins of the cold war, which is that Soviet aggressiveness toward the West in the postwar period must be understood

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primarily as a reaction to the aggressive designs and threats of the United States. Now, arguments and opinions of this kind are difficult to deal with, especially since many of the "revisionists" insist on blithely disregarding facts and are largely ignorant of Soviet history and the mentality of Soviet rulers. Mr. Kennan is not among this company, but his own account of his ambassadorship to Russia is illuminating with regard to the question of American "militarization." For several months this firm believer in the possibility of a Soviet-American understanding, this admirer of the Russian people and of Russian culture, endured what amounted to incarceration in the American embassy. The significance of the episode transcends its harrowing details of chicanery, provocation, and espionage. For the simple fact is that Stalin would never have prescribed such insulting treatment for the ambassador of the world's most powerful state if he thought Russia was in imminent danger of military attack.

Despite all the American bases, the Captive Nations Resolution, the crudities of anti-Communist rhetoric and the like, Stalin's behavior—which is synonymous with Soviet policy—between 1945 and 1953 can by no stretch of the imagination be considered that of a man afraid of unprovoked, or even of certain types of provoked, aggression. We did not scare him; he scared us. It is *because* we were scared that there occurred the "militarization of policy toward Russia." Neither under Truman nor under the Eisenhower-Dulles administration did the U.S. resort to threats aimed at securing *concessions* from Russia. Even at his most flamboyant, Dulles spoke only of "retaliation." So if one is to understand Mr. Kennan's use of the term, "militarization," he must mean by it what he deplores elsewhere in the book: the decision to go ahead with the development of the H-bomb and what he calls Russia's "encirclement by American bases," as against the patient and craftsmanlike use of diplomacy to resolve our differences with the Soviet Union.

YET could even the most skillful diplomacy have made a difference? On some issues, absolutely not. We might have forsworn the development of the H-bomb, but there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that the Russians would have gone ahead on their own, and no agreements, promises, or treaties would have hindered them in that pursuit. In other areas, notably on the question of Germany, it is possible that we might have reached an agreement, even with Stalin—but only if the United States had been ruled by a dictator or an oligarchy. Through the use of convincing threats on the one hand and offers of tangible benefits on the other, we might have induced Stalin to agree to a division of the world into spheres of influence, an agreement modeled after the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact but on a much larger scale. Yet it is enough to mention this precedent, the only occasion on which Stalin fairly scrupulously observed an agreement he had made with another power, to see that such a course was not open to a democracy. It would have entailed a *real* "militarization," not only of our foreign policy but of our entire society.

What has been said of Stalin holds true to a lesser extent for the post-Stalin era as well. Mr. Kennan cites the memorandum he addressed to the State Department in 1952. After allowing that not "all Soviet professions of suspicion of ourselves" are sincere, he went on in that document to state that there is a "hard core of genuine belief in the sinisterness of Western intentions" and that this belief is the result "in considerable part though not entirely" of a "misinterpretation on their part of Western policies in the years from 1948 to the present." Yet the hard core of Stalin's suspicions touched not so much on our intentions as on what we were and could not help being, and with certain important modifications this has remained the case with his successors. That the U.S. boasted the most powerful economy in the world was greater cause for worry in Stalin's view than all our foreign bases and atom bombs. It would take some fifteen years, Stalin said in 1946 (in a prediction which proved unduly pessimistic), for Russia to produce 60 million tons of steel, "and only then will our Fatherland be safe from all sorts of possible danger." Again, Soviet hostility toward the U.S. took a sharp upward turn after the announcement of the Marshall Plan, in which the Soviet Union had been invited to participate. Our pouring in of billions to set Western Europe on its feet was considered a greater threat by the Kremlin than our subsequent and interminably sluggish effort to rearm West Germany. In brief, there was, and there continues to be, no way of completely allaying Soviet suspicions of the U.S. short of this country's vanishing or reverting to an agrarian economy.

Suspiciousness, indeed, is such an integral part of the makeup of the rulers of the Soviet Union, that it seems they are almost relieved to deal with a Western statesman who conforms to their idea of what a capitalist should be, rather than one who exudes benevolence and progressive views. John Foster Dulles's tenure at the Department of State had, as Mr. Kennan rightly observes, a disastrous effect on the morale of our foreign service, and hardly less on relations with our allies. But the Soviets accorded Dulles a grudging measure of respect, greater than that enjoyed by any other American statesman in the period covered by Mr. Kennan. In the Kremlin's view, Dulles was a sort of capitalist Molotov, a bit sinister but in a rather predictable and reassuring way. After he was gone the Russians felt there

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was no one in Washington they could negotiate with, in the sense they usually understand negotiation, i.e., how to make a bargain at a third party's expense. Khrushchev, for instance, came to America to discover whether the Americans had any interesting ideas in this direction concerning China. But when he delicately broached the subject to President Eisenhower the latter would not touch it. For it was true of the President, as Mr. Kennan says, that "no royal personage ever possessed to a higher degree the art of repulsing, with a charming, baffling evasiveness any attempt on the part of a casual visitor to come to grips with him over a serious political subject." Yet Khrushchev was no casual visitor, and part of his personal bitterness at Eisenhower following the U-2 imbroglio must be traced to this episode.

THERE are ineluctable limits to what even the most enlightened, non-sword-rattling, respectful policy can bring about in the way of improved Soviet-American relations. American democracy has not done so very badly in coping with this problem, although Mr. Kennan, a diplomat to the core, feels that diplomacy, *his* kind of diplomacy, free from rude intrusions of domestic politics and passions, could have done better. Yet if we look back at the "golden age" of diplomacy in 19th-century Britain, we would be hard put to find what Mr. Kennan insists upon, a diplomacy which has "its own integrity as purely an exercise in foreign policy." Within the elegant aristocratic context of British society of the period the vultures of domestic politics nibbled at foreign policy at least as vigorously as they have in our own inelegant and democratic society. There was no Captive Nations Week, but foreign secretaries flinched whenever a "friend" of Polish, Bulgarian, or . . . Russian freedom got up to ask a question in the House of Commons. Even a statesman like Palmerston was not above shaping policy in accordance with the liberationist prejudices of the ignorant electorate. What can be done about this? "We must educate our masters," said Lord Salisbury in the 1890's. Mr. Kennan has greatly contributed to the education of the public both about Russia and about the dilemmas of America's role in the world. But it does not help when, as in the current volume, having grown exasperated with the task and irritated with his pupils, he blames them for things over which in large measure they have had no control.

As for the Communist side, Mr. Kennan's account still offers grounds for some very cautious optimism. In vivid contrast to his experience in Moscow, he hugely enjoyed his term as ambassador to Yugoslavia. Partly this was due to the undeniable charm of the people and the country, but largely, one suspects, it was the delightful surprise of finding a Communist country whose officials were "approachable, competent, and courteous" and whose supreme leader was as different from the Kremlin recluse as day from night. Yet prior to their break with Stalin (and even for a time thereafter) Tito and his colleagues had been the most fanatical and militantly anti-Western group of Communist leaders in all of Eastern Europe. Their animus against the West, unallayed by all the aid they had received from Britain and America during the war, was so great that the Soviets themselves had to warn them against attempting to seize Trieste, and against shooting at American planes that wandered over their territory. Their internal policies were brutally repressive, more so than those of any other Communist government outside Russia.

What transformed Tito and his associates into a humane and open-minded leadership, at least in comparison with other Communist oligarchies? To a degree, but not a large degree, the economic and military aid we extended to them during the worst period of their danger. But the main credit must go to Stalin; the danger he posed to Yugoslavia was a real danger, and it exorcised the fictitious one which Tito had seen in us. Nothing we might have said or done prior to 1948 would have persuaded Tito not to fear us, and the possible effect we might have on his people, but once the Yugoslavs accepted the possibility of real coexistence with the West, a measure of toleration and common sense entered their thinking on other subjects as well. One need not overestimate the depth of this transformation or exclude the possibility of a relapse after age has claimed the mercurial leader who has guided the process, but Mr. Kennan is surely right to see in Yugoslavia a model of the kind of Communism which both Russians and Americans would have cause to welcome.

The case of Yugoslavia is instructive because it shows how changes within the Communist world and the evolution of Communist mentality depend much less on factors within our power than on the configuration of events and forces within that world itself. All we can do is await hopefully a change for the better and recognize it when it takes place. Is this not in essence what Mr. Kennan once attempted to convey to us in enunciating the doctrine of containment?

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Lords of the Press

Rudolf Klein

THE mass media and their masters, the men who control the large-circulation press and television, exert a peculiar, half-guilty fascination upon us. All power is, of course, interesting, but the element of guilt in our fascination springs from another source. The power of the mass media often tends to be seen as a corruption of the democratic process. In the traditional rhetoric of the fourth estate, the press and television are an essential part of this process because they serve as a neutral channel for the information which the citizen must have if he is to carry out his duties as a voter and an active participant in public affairs. In the rhetoric of the critics, however, the role of the mass media becomes an alien, disruptive element—on the one hand, usurping the function of political leaders by trying to shape opinion and, on the other, seducing the intellectually innocent reader or viewer by presenting a commercially inspired, neatly packaged view of the world. These critics make curious bedfellows—they include Vice President Agnew on the Right and Herbert Marcuse on the Left in the United States—and they are to be found on both sides of the Atlantic. For the populists of the Left and Right, the mass media represent a threat to their own role of trying to establish a dialogue with the "people"; for the intellectuals of the Left and Right, the mass media are the forces driving all flavor and individuality out of ideas.

It is therefore hardly surprising that the masters of the mass media tend to be thought of as mythical, demonic figures. What is more, the first generation of press magnates—Hearst in the United States, Northcliffe in Britain—had just the right mixture of megalomania and flamboyance required to provide the raw material for myths. Coming nearer to our own time, there have been Henry Luce in the United States and Lord Beaverbrook in Britain, both of whom created large press empires, both of whom were much hated, both of whom died in the 60's, and both of whom have recently become the subjects of biographies.* Looking at their lives—which frequently crossed each other, though Beaverbrook was much the older man—is therefore a convenient way of examining some aspects of the myth of mass-media power. The enterprise is made all the more interesting because the two men came from much the same background, yet acted within very different societies.

Beaverbrook was born Max Aitken in the backwoods of Canada in 1879. His father was a minister of the Church of Scotland (a branch of Presbyterianism). When he left Canada in 1910, to return only as an occasional visitor, he was already a multimillionaire. His success was the result partly of his financial skill in arranging mergers—the steel and cement industries provided his most spectacular coups in this area—and partly of his calculating, rightly as it turned out, on a continuing boom. By the time he reached England, he was an expert in persuasion, an experienced go-between in commercial affairs, and a manipulator of men.

Shortly after his arrival, Beaverbrook (as I shall call him to save confusion, though he did not get the title until 1916) managed to get himself elected as a Conservative Member of Parliament. Soon he became the intimate of the Conservative leader, Bonar Law, whom he assisted financially through successful stock speculations. In the middle of World War I he was deeply involved in the maneuvers which substituted Lloyd George for Asquith as Prime Minister. Subsequently rewarded with a title and a seat in the House of Lords—the acceptance of which he later came to see as a terrible blunder, since under the British system a peer is politically a second-class citizen compared with a Member of Parliament—he continued as Bonar Law's henchman, playing a key role in bringing about the latter's emergence as a short-lived (literally) Prime Minister. On Bonar Law's death in 1923, Beaverbrook entered the political wilderness. Throughout the 20's and 30's he campaigned—along with Lord Rothermere, a fellow press baron—for "Empire Free Trade," the slogan for turning Britain's colonies and dominions into a sort of

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* *Beaverbrook*, by A. J. P. Taylor, Simon & Schuster, 712 pp., $12.95; *Luce & His Empire*, by W. A. Swanberg, Scribner's, 529 pp., $12.50.

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British Empire Common Market. In World War II, Beaverbrook once again played a political role, becoming Minister of Aircraft Production in the administration of his friend, Winston Churchill. With Churchill's defeat in 1945, Beaverbrook's political career ended, though he was to live for almost twenty years longer.

Beaverbrook's career as a press lord began as an incidental offshoot of his political ambitions: in 1918 he bought control of the ailing *Daily Express* to insure its continued support for the Convervative cause (during this period it was not unusual for men anxious to secure political influence, or to buy a title, to invest their money in this way). What began as a sideline ended as an all-absorbing hobby. When the *Sunday Express* and the *Evening Standard* were added to his stable, Beaverbrook was able to dominate the British newspaper industry. Yet the use of the word hobby here is deliberate, for though Beaverbrook made a great deal of money out of his papers, the accumulation of wealth was never his prime purpose in owning them; to make money, he could always rely on his financial expertise in buying and selling companies—at one time, for example, he owned Rolls Royce.

HENRY Luce's career is more familiar. He was born in 1898 in China, where his father was a Presbyterian missionary. After graduating from Yale, he and his classmate —Briton Hadden—borrowed and begged $86,000 with which to launch their brainchild, *Time*. The first issue was published in 1923. After Hadden's death, when Luce had made himself master of the company, *Life* was added. As the circulation and advertising revenue of the two magazines grew, so did Luce's wealth and his appetite for political influence (though only his wife was ever to hold office, as American Ambassador to Italy). Luce, like Beaverbrook, had his special cause: in Luce's case the Chinese Nationalists. Yet unlike Beaverbrook, Luce never found his Bonar Law—a political figure to whom he could attach himself—even though in the Eisenhower era, particularly while John Foster Dulles lived, he felt an ideological affinity with the men in power.

The biographers of these two men are, if anything, even more of a contrast than their subjects. A. J. P. Taylor is one of Britain's leading historians; late in life he formed a warm friendship with Beaverbrook, and his book is—as he himself stresses—a labor of love. He was able to draw not only on Beaverbrook's personal archives but also on the various papers of British politicians collected by Beaverbrook. The result is a scholarly work, though by no means a dispassionate assessment. Taylor himself has cultivated a reputation as the *enfant terrible* of English historians, deliberately seeking out received opinions to puncture and often trying to shock, and his academic career has suffered from the suspicions felt of him by the Establishment. Thus Taylor's portrait of Beaverbrook as the mischief-loving outsider is to some extent a self-portrait, which helps to explain certain of the indulgences of his book.

Whatever the faults of W. A. Swanberg's biography of Luce, indulgence is not one of them. This is an indictment of the character being described, not an attempt to portray him in the round. It is written essentially from the outside, though Swanberg was able to draw on the papers of some of Luce's collaborators and friends. Oddly enough, Swanberg himself tends to use the *Time*-jargon even while excoriating its originator. This is his description of Luce's visit to London in 1934, and his encounter with Beaverbrook for which, unfortunately, there is no counterpart in Taylor's book:

> Among those he called on was undersized Lord Beaverbrook, the former William Maxwell Aitken, son of a Canadian Presbyterian preacher who fought his way to wealth by age thirty and now owned the money-making London *Daily Express*. Cynical, exhibitionist, a woman-chaser, often a journalistic charlatan, a Presbyterian matchless in backsliding, Beaverbrook might have been expected to repel the American. On the contrary he fascinated Luce, who cultivated the friendship at every later opportunity throughout Beaverbrook's life. . . . Some of his colleagues theorized that for one thing Luce had an ingenuous respect for titles, and for another that his inordinate concern with power fired his interest in those who had won power even by methods not of the manse. He was studying in the flesh the acquisition and use of power.

The passage has been quoted at length because it deserves close scrutiny. Throughout his book, Swanberg criticizes *Time*—rightly, in my view—for its use of what might be called the pejorative stereotype: the encapsulation of someone's character in a striking, vivid phrase or two, often using physical detail to convey either approval (clear-eyed, rugged, handsome, etc.) or disapproval (thin-lipped, haggard, nervous, etc.). Stylistically this has the attraction of economy, of conveying the maximum meaning in the least number of words—not a bad principle in writing; it may be no accident that one of *Time*'s writers in its formative days was Archibald MacLeish. It is when this style becomes a parody of itself that it becomes objectionable, as in Swanberg's own characterization of Beaverbrook as an "undersized" womanizer, exhibitionist, and so on. Not that the words used are in themselves strictly untrue. A *Time*-type researcher checking the book for accuracy might well let them pass: Beaverbrook was a small man and a womanizer. Yet the overall impression is wrong: the stereotype of a sinister dwarf-like figure simply does not match

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the man, who was far more complex and interesting (though not necessarily the benevolent philanthropist of Taylor's biography) than Swanberg's paragraph suggests.

To declare my own interest: I worked for Beaverbrook as a journalist for ten years; I was hired by him and left on amicable terms. During those ten years I saw him on occasion, but more frequently was in touch with him through the laconic messages he sent to my editors—some of which I quote below. By the time I got to know him, he was already in his seventies, but the dominating impression he gave was one of charm. He simply had more charm than any other man I have ever come across; if he was a wicked old man, as in some ways he was, it was because of his empathy with other people, his ability to understand their strengths and (more important) exploit their weaknesses. Like Luce, Beaverbrook hired some of the best writers, but if he bought talent, he did so only partly with money. His real bait was a subtle form of flattery, the flattery offered by great wealth and experience talking to youth and inexperience on equal terms. Even in his last years, he conveyed a sense of fun—a feeling of somehow inviting you to join him in a harmless, but enjoyable conspiracy against the strait-laced, conventional, thick-headed world.

A more serious matter—and more to the point in a discussion of the role of the mass media and the press lords—concerns the phrase Swanberg slips in about Beaverbrook being the epitome of "the acquisition and use of power." If Swanberg is right in thinking that Luce shared Beaverbrook's interest in power, and perhaps in this respect even modeled himself on the Englishman, it becomes important to find out whether Beaverbrook actually had power at his disposal. What power, when it comes to that, does any press lord or mass-media magnate have?

Sociologists tend to tie themselves in semantic knots trying to define power. Perhaps "the ability to force people to do what they otherwise would not do" will serve as a rough-and-ready definition. But to accept this meaning one must accept the fact that neither Beaverbrook nor Luce ever had power. Certainly Beaverbrook's career—as Taylor states in his biography and as Beaverbrook himself used to concede in conversation—shows how little he achieved through his control of newspapers. Even when joined by his fellow press magnate, Lord Rothermere, Beaverbrook failed to compel the Conservative party in the interwar period of 1918-39 to accept his Empire Free Trade policy—although he backed the propaganda of his papers and those of his allies by financing and organizing a political campaign which ran parliamentary candidates of its own. The only time that Beaverbrook ever exercised power—if the word is not to be used so loosely as to be utterly meaningless—was when he abandoned his role as a press lord and became a minister in Churchill's government. But here too perhaps his biggest handicap was the fact of his owning newspapers, which only aroused suspicion and antagonism among his fellow ministers who, in any case, were uncomfortable with Beaverbrook.

Luce's biographer does not cite a single example of the successful use of power, yet he obviously thinks of Luce as a powerful man; indeed, the whole book is meant as an indictment of the irresponsible use of power. But when Swanberg talks about power, he really means influence. In this he is not alone. Most of the talk about the power of the mass media is really a debate about the extent of its influence. And that, of course, is the trouble. Power is a relatively specific concept, and its absence or possession can be demonstrated; influence is a vague, general concept, difficult to pin down, impossible to measure. Yet it would be obvious nonsense to avoid talking about it simply because it is such a slippery, inchoate, and easily perverted term.

Certainly the academic work on the subject of the mass media reinforces the need for caution. The more research that is done, the more it appears that no easy generalizations are possible about the influence of the mass media generally, let alone of any one newspaper or magazine specifically. As I read the literature (conveniently summed up in Joseph T. Klapper's *The Effects of Mass Communication*), the real problem is to divorce the influence of the mass media from the influence of family, friends, and social environment generally. In forming opinions, the mass media are only one element in a complex interaction of many elements. On the whole, the mass media are more successful in reinforcing people's existing views than in changing them, in influencing opinions about new, emergent issues than affecting them on old ones, in shaping attitudes toward far-off events than altering those which spring from people's own experience. As V. O. Key put it in his classic study *Public Opinion and American Democracy*: "The flow of the messages of the mass media is rather like dropping a handful of confetti from the rim of the Grand Canyon with the object of striking a man astride a burro on the canyon floor. In some measure chance determines which messages reach what targets."

Swanberg subscribes to the simplistic view that the influence of the media is self-evident, that assertion is proof. Thus he writes of the 1960 Presidential election: "Certainly the *Time-Life* swing to Nixon saved the Vice President from the clear defeat he would otherwise have suffered as a result of his poor showing in the great television debates. Looking at it the other way, had the Luce press attacked Kennedy as it had attacked Stevenson, it seems safe to say that

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Nixon would have been elected. By a strange twist of fate, Luce in all probability had put a Democrat in the White House." On the whole "it seems safe to say" that it would be as rational to attribute the outcome of Presidential elections to the phases of the moon as it is to attribute them to the influence of specific magazines or newspapers: all the evidence so far is against this sort of interpretation.

But in attacking the too-easy assumptions about the positive influence of the mass media, there is a risk of replacing them with too-simple assertions about their total lack of influence. The difficulty, as so often in the social sciences, is to know how to deal with factors which cannot easily be isolated or measured but which on that account must neither be dismissed as negligible nor mystically accepted as all-powerful. Indeed it is possible to argue that the mass media are influential simply because they are believed to be so: the fact that politicians *think* that the mass media are influential, in the sense of affecting public attitudes, makes them so. After all, why should a succession of Presidents—from Roosevelt to Johnson—have courted Luce, if they did not think that he had influence through his magazines? The invitations to the White House, the confidential briefings, seem to be the most convincing evidence of the influence of Luce. Moreover, on his extensive travels abroad Luce found all doors deferentially open to him: Swanberg's book is illustrated with snapshots of Luce and Churchill, Luce and Tito, Luce and Nasser—the record of political big-game hunting. If a man is worth courting and flattering, then surely he must have some influence. If people are afraid of incurring his hostility, then surely there must be a good reason for this fear. Even if researchers are unable to find a single person whose views were ever changed or affected on any subject by reading *Time* or *Life*, this would not alter the fact that Presidents and others acted as though this person did exist in multiple form. So perhaps it is not unreasonable to look in more detail at Swanberg's argument about the damaging influence of Luce and his magazines on the political life of the United States.

The pervading theme of Luce's life, as Swanberg sees it, was his anti-Communism. More important, though, it was a Manichean anti-Communism: the struggle with Communism, in the Luce view, was not just a political contest with a rival power-bloc but a missionary crusade against evil. As Luce wrote: "The struggle between Freedom and Communism is, at bottom, a moral issue. And any serious moral issue is, at bottom, a religious issue." Hence his support for the Dulles approach to foreign policy; he described Dulles as "the champion of a moral order in politics." This theme received its most passionate orchestration as a result of Luce's personal, emotional involvement with China. Born in China, he believed he had a special understanding of that country. When *Time*'s reporters in China described the corruption of the Kuomintang regime, and predicted its disintegration, Luce knew better. His hero, Chiang Kai-shek, was bound to win, provided only that he was given enough American support. The fact that the Communists won only went to show that the United States had let Chiang down, not that America had for far too long supported an unviable regime without popular support. Not surprisingly, Luce became one of the mainstays of the China lobby, helping to perpetuate the view that there could be no accommodation or agreement with Mao's China any more than there could be compromise with the forces of evil. Domestically, too, Luce tended to share the crusading view of his one-time employee, Whittaker Chambers: Senator Joseph McCarthy was finally attacked in Luce's magazines because his methods threatened to tarnish the cause which he was ostensibly supporting. Luce wrote: "My basic feeling about the whole McCarthy thing is that its greatest damage to America is that it distracts the American people from the real problems which confront them. . . . McCarthy is a menace to America not because he is a menace to civil liberty as the eggheads wail but because he distracts America from serious consideration of the really great things they should be doing for peace and liberty throughout the world." Again, Luce saw "no evidence. . .that the congressional committees are trying to impair academic or personal freedom. . . . I have yet to see one witness called before a congressional hearing who could be called 'innocent.'"

SWANBERG's book is written very much as the case for the prosecution. No evidence for the defense is allowed. But even keeping this in mind, the indictment seems convincing. If Luce did have any influence on American politics and policies, it was a damaging one. True, his religious anti-Communism saved him from sharing either the euphoric post-1945 views of so many liberals or the cynicism of a Beaverbrook who in 1944 wrote to Bernard Baruch: "I continue to pursue my simple policy in relation to Britain, the United States, and Russia. It is, in fact, too simple to be appreciated by any but a very simple man. That policy is to be one of a mutual admiration society of three." Beaverbrook was entirely consistent in this view: his comment on the failure of the Russian army to assist the Polish rising in Warsaw in August 1944 was that ". . . whatever the cause of the tragedy, the friendship of Russia is far more important to us than the future of Anglo-Polish relations." However, Luce was unable to see international relations except in terms of the good/evil dichotomy, a view which did not allow for finer shades or admit the need for tactical compromises.

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America was marked out by Providence to do battle in the cause of freedom. "For the first time America has a Capital-E Enemy—huge, brainy, implacable, our self-avowed Enemy," Luce told a meeting of his executives at the beginning of the 60's. "A clear and irrevocable determination to clear the way for Liberty and Progress must be made sometime, somewhere, by somebody. . . .I propose that the determination be made now, that it be made here, and that it be made by the editors and managers of Time Inc."

This sort of comic-strip sermon style does make the gorge rise, all the more so since Luce fancied himself an intellectual; his private style, as distinct from his public rhetoric, was a somewhat convoluted prose-flannel. But Swanberg's conclusions—that Luce must take a large share of the responsibility for America's involvement in Vietnam, for example—surely flatter the effectiveness of *Time-Life*. The question of whether Luce influenced opinion or whether he appeared to influence it because he followed it is probably unanswerable. But any assessment of Luce—or any other press lord—should surely ask it. Possibly Luce helped to reinforce existing stereotypes of Communism; possibly, too, he managed to write a few words on the blank slates of people's minds about far-away countries which were only blobs on the map to them anyway. It seems too much of a compliment, though, to portray him as a creator of ideas and attitudes—though he did exploit both, often in most distasteful ways. A reasonable conclusion (though still not a provable one) might be that Luce's magazines may have influenced their readers' views on those issues, particularly in foreign affairs, of which they had no great personal knowledge or commitment; conversely, though, these views—precisely because they are shallow—can quickly change again in response to other influences, such as a Presidential visit to Peking. Again, Swanberg's book is written almost as if Luce's magazines were the only means of communication in the United States. Toward the end of his life, Swanberg concedes, even Luce appeared to accept that it might be necessary—perhaps even desirable—to negotiate with the forces of darkness. Was this because he felt that public opinion and the rest of the mass media were moving in that direction and, never a man to swim against the tide, he felt he had to go along with the change? It is at least arguable that the masters of the mass media are influential only when they are flexible—there is nothing as safe for one's reputation as a weather expert as predicting rain when the first drops have begun to fall. When press lords try to chip away at the rock of indifference and disinterest, as Beaverbrook did on the issue of Empire Free Trade, they become comic figures.

Swanberg's other indictment of Luce is, in a way, more serious. Luce, he argues in effect, corrupted and perverted journalism. It was not just that he advocated the wrong policies, it was that he misused the mass media, devaluing the whole currency of communication. He did so partly, as already mentioned, by the use of the simple stereotype, the hallmark of the *Time*-style. But Swanberg also condemns Luce for using his magazines for propaganda rather than information—and, more particularly, for dressing up the former as the latter. Both these charges raise important issues about the media.

IN PRINCIPLE, of course, one is bound to condemn the mass media for oversimplifying life. At the extreme, it is easy enough to see the mischief done, for example, by stereotypes about racial characteristics, even when these are efforts to reverse historical attitudes by making everything black beautiful. Yet in fact all writing is oversimplification: the attempt to capture an infinitely complex reality in finite prose of limited length. Indeed it is hypocritical to deny that we are all dependent on the oversimplifications of the mass media. Obtaining information, as the economists point out, is an expensive business, costly both in terms of the time spent and the money devoted to buying newspapers, magazines, or television sets. All of us rely on journalists to select and process on our behalf. The original idea behind *Time* (and it isn't clear whether the credit for this belongs to Luce or Hadden, his co-founder) was one of genius: to masticate all the available information on behalf of the reader, to put into focus what is otherwise an unmanageable tangle of messages. The dependence on this sort of predigestion is probably all the greater in a country as diverse as the United States, which may help to explain why imitations of *Time* rarely seem to have come off in other countries.

The temptation of this type of journalism is to make everything a little too orderly, a little too neat, to sacrifice too much to the slick epigram which sums up a situation or the cutting phrase which describes a person. It is a temptation which *Time* embraced, and surrendered to, with enthusiasm, from the start. So much of Swanberg's criticism sticks—though one is always tempted to ask whether the readers of *Time* take the magazine quite as seriously as its critics (intellectuals are perhaps inclined to ignore the possibility that the ordinary reader may not take everything quite at face value—and may conceivably even be as sharp as they are in distinguishing between information and entertainment). Equally, Luce himself admitted the second charge: that his magazines were used for propaganda. What is more, Luce was inclined to challenge the whole concept of objectivity in journalism: selection, he argued, was not only inevitable but was bound to reflect the prejudices and views of those doing it.

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In this Luce was at one with Beaverbrook. The latter was more outspoken still, when in 1948 he gave evidence to the Royal Commission on the Press: "I ran the paper purely for propaganda, and with no other purpose." However, he was less honest than Luce when he finished by saying, "The policy is that there shall be no propaganda in the news. There is a strong, stern rule, and the most tremendous attempt. . .to carry the rule into effect." It just so happened that those selecting the news in the Beaverbrook newspapers seemed to be particularly interested in news unfavorable to the 1945-51 Labour government in Britain and again in news unfavorable to the Common Market in the 60's when Beaverbrook was fighting Britain's entry.

What is most damaging about this sort of selection, or *Time*'s peculiar angle of vision on international affairs in Luce's day, is not that it happens. It is the myth that it does not happen. To be aware that "news" is an artifact, created as much by men as by events, is to realize also the need to read newspapers or watch television with skepticism and awareness of the prejudices informing those writing or producing them. In a sense, the real damage done by Luce in this respect was his insistence on maintaining the pretense of his publishing a digest of information, even while pointing out to his staff in private that objectivity was impossible. The manifesto published by Luce and Hadden when they first launched *Time* claimed that ". . .this magazine is not founded to promulgate prejudices, liberal or conservative. 'To keep men well-informed'—that, first and last, is the only ax this magazine has to grind." In fact, though, *Time* continued to grind a whole armory of axes.

But, of course, as an ax-grinder Luce had certain very special characteristics. To discuss simply the content of his ideology—his anti-Communism or his idealization of big business—is to miss the flavor of the man, and possibly also the reason for his impact. Luce had the peculiar self-confidence of a successful Presbyterian, a man whose religion told him that he was saved—and who saw in his worldly success a visible sign of his spiritual grace. In this, Luce is an interesting contrast to his fellow-Presbyterian, Beaverbrook. For the key to Beaverbrook's character has always seemed to me to have been his fear of death: he was a Presbyterian who saw himself not among the elect but among the damned. (Oddly enough, Swanberg makes this point in his book but Taylor does not so much as mention it.) I remember talking to Beaverbrook toward the end of his life, when many of his executives were dead or decrepit, and hearing him say, "The hand of the Lord is upon us," in his best Old Testament manner.

Luce's vices were those of a man sure of his own good intentions and rectitude. This perhaps accounts for the curious similarity between his own approach to "truth" and that of his doctrinal enemies, the Communists. Truth for him (as for all believers, religious and political) was something that was self-evident to the initiated—it was discovered not by the reporter on the spot but by the man with the spiritual insight to see through the factitious nature of appearances and to recognize the real immanent truth. Hence Luce's confident assertion of the truth of America's betrayal of Chiang, and his imperviousness to mere facts. It is in precisely the same way that the fellow-travelers of the 30's *knew* that there were no prison camps in Russia and that only the guilty were shot in the purge trials. In this sense Luce had the arrogance of those who know themselves to be saved.

By contrast, Beaverbrook had the irresponsibility of those who believe themselves to be damned. True enough, he had his own cause: the crusade for Empire Free Trade. But this never became an ideology for him: it was not (as anti-Communism was for Luce) a way of life. Possibly his real satisfaction lay in the *fight* itself and no one would have been more disappointed than he if Empire Free Trade actually had become a reality; this view is strengthened by the fact that resistance to the scheme came not only from British politicians, who were the target of the campaign, but from the leaders of the Empire countries, and particularly the Canadians—as Beaverbrook knew perfectly well.

BEAVERBROOK's lack of ideology produced a certain volatility in his views: his opinions were a kaleidoscope which tended to take on different patterns depending on who did the shaking, though Taylor emphasizes the best of Beaverbrook. There is, for example, Beaverbrook's consistent advocacy of policies designed to promote full employment. To his credit, he opposed the policies that led to the slump of the 30's, and supported full-employment policies to the end of his life. "If unemployment is a necessity, let us dispose of the capitalist system," reads one of his memoranda sent to instruct me in my writing activities. "I don't for one minute accept unemployment as a condition of the successful operation of the capitalist system. The idea that we should have to go through the world with unemployment even in the smallest measure is like sowing typhoid germs." Then there is Beaverbrook's libertarian streak, as shown in the following note:

> This is our policy—
> 1) Never to interfere with the pleasures of the people, whether it be gambling, drinking, or other sports.
> 2) Never to set the police on anyone whether they be innocent or nocent.

However, Beaverbrook's streak of irresponsibility—his refusal to commit himself to any sort of

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moral position—could, while it saved him from the absurdities of Luce's redemptorial view of world affairs, also lead him to adopt some strange attitudes. In 1939, it led him to advocate not appeasement of Hitler but isolationism for Britain, a view shared by his biographer who, amazingly, can write: "On March 15 a new period of crisis began. Rump Czechoslovakia fell to pieces, and Hitler turned Bohemia into a German protectorate," making it sound as though Czechoslovakia's disintegration had been a natural process, unprompted by Germany, with Hitler merely picking up the pieces. After the war Beaverbrook also opposed Britain's liquidation of her colonial empire and gave a voice to the often nasty jingoism of those who opposed this withdrawal (a theme strangely neglected by Taylor). Thus in 1960 Beaverbrook was telling his editors: "We are a colonial power. We wish to sustain the Colonial Empire. The black people are not yet in a position to exercise authority, so it must remain resting in Britain."

On the whole, though, I would suspect that Beaverbrook did less harm than Luce. He may have caused much grief to individuals by his occasional use of his newspapers to settle private quarrels, but then, *Time* can hardly be counted innocent on this score. It is difficult not to conclude that Luce would have been greatly improved by a touch of cynicism, an element of doubt, and a greater consciousness of his own fallibility—qualities in which, to judge from Swanberg's biography at any rate, he was conspicuously deficient. If there have to be mass-media magnates, it seems vastly preferable that they should be cynical sinners like Beaverbrook rather than moral missionaries like Luce.

But to make this point is also to assume that there have to be mass-media magnates, that Citizen Kane, in his various incarnations, must always be with us. Is this not too defeatist a conclusion? One can argue, of course, that the press lord or the television tycoon has already become a historical phenomenon and has been replaced (like other entrepreneurs) by corporate managers. But this sort of reasoning assumes that it is the fact of one-man control over a large segment of the mass media which is the important phenomenon, rather than the concentration of ownership as such. Yet it is surely the latter factor which matters more, even when the control is exercised collectively and unobtrusively by managers rather than individually and spectacularly by a Beaverbrook or a Luce. Team control will probably mean an end to the flamboyant eccentricities of the press lords; but it is not self-evident that consensus journalism, anxious to avoid offending either consumers or advertisers, will improve the quality of the media.

Nor is there an easy way out of this dilemma by advocating a greater share in the control of the mass media by the men who produce the news: the newspaper and television journalists. This sort of syndicalism, which is popular just now in Britain, assumes that the producers will somehow be more "responsible," more civic-minded, than either the traditional tycoon or the managerial team, an assumption which seems overly optimistic. The self-regulating professions like medicine and the law have tended to define the public interest in terms of their own interests, and it is difficult to see why journalists should be expected to be more selfless and idealistic. What is more, self-regulation in the professions does not as a rule involve command over the vast capital sums that are required by the mass media. Accountability to stockholders may be a poor way of insuring good newspapers and television programs, as distinct from those earning high profits, but can some other form of accountability be devised?

In the long run, though, the best hope may lie in attacking the concentration of ownership rather than its form; in encouraging a more pluralistic system for the mass media. There are already hopeful signs in this direction, such as the emergence of minority-group newspapers and magazines—speaking not, as traditionally, for ethnic minorities but for age, taste, or political minorities. There may be more hopeful signs still, when the technical possibilities of multi-channel television transmission become fully developed. Conceivably it might even turn out that the mass media—and the Luces and the Beaverbrooks—have been a transient phenomenon in a deeper sense still. Hitherto they have been instruments of social homogenization—they first developed at the end of the 19th century when America was seeking to assimilate foreign immigrants and Britain was seeking to assimilate the domestic immigrants of the working class. If in fact the next few decades are going to see the acceptance of more social differentiation—not necessarily along class or even ethnic lines, but in the sense of accepting that a "mass" is in fact a collection of minorities—it may be that the media will evolve in response to the change.

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Defaming the Jews

Robert Alter

People should be taught what is, not what should be. All my humor is based on destruction and despair.

—Lenny Bruce

Some clichés become so hallowed by usage that they can serve as a cover for the worst kinds of crassness and stupidity. This seems to be increasingly the case with the familiar notion of Jewish humor as the time-honored way for Jews to laugh with shrewd candor at their own foibles. "Self-deprecation is, after all, a classic form of Jewish humor," Alex Portnoy tells the burly kibbutz girl with whom—or rather on whom—he is unable to perform sexually; but one may legitimately ask what are the limits of self-deprecation, where and how does it slide into a rather different psychological stance toward the self.

Such questions have in fact been raised as a matter of public discussion by Ernest Lehman's film version of *Portnoy's Complaint*. It is interesting to note that there was some nervousness about the film even in its pre-production stage. Richard Zanuck declined to make the film for 20th Century Fox, reportedly because he didn't want to be involved in another X-rated movie, though a ranking 20th-Century-Fox executive privately admitted a personal sense of relief at escaping the responsibility for putting such a terrible Jewish mother on the screen. The rights were subsequently picked up by Warner Brothers, and Lehman, at Warner Brothers, when questioned by letter about his intentions by the Jewish Film Advisory Committee, retorted quite properly that he insisted on "the same freedom of artistic expression" accorded writers or directors dealing with non-ethnic materials. He also affirmed that he would do everything he could "to make the picture as tasteful as possible without doing fatal violence to the spirit of Philip Roth's novel."

Though it is not my intention here to write a movie review, it seems to me important to keep clearly in mind that *Portnoy's Complaint* is a dismal failure as a film, for its ethnic embarrassments are intimately related to its artistic ones. It is an extraordinarily uncinematic film, static in its use of camera, trite and unimaginative in its conception of scene and in its editing, mechanical in its lengthy transcription of passages from the novel, with wooden performances in the lead roles by Richard Benjamin and Karen Black. The good taste Lehman promised exhausts itself in strategies for edging the film from an X-rating to an R-rating. This is accomplished mainly through visual ellipsis in sexual matters while most of the verbal explicitness of the novel is retained. To wit, the Monkey, Portnoy's polymorphously passionate mistress, is filmed in the throes of cunnilingual climax from the shoulders up, her burrowing lover and her bodily charms safely off camera. A similar notion of good taste seems to have guided Lehman in his treatment of Jewish materials, although here the ellipses, when they occur, are verbal rather than visual. Thus, we are regaled with Sophie Portnoy ranting to Alex about the dangers of eating "their" French fries and "their" hamburgers, but the words *kosher* and *traif* are not pronounced, and Portnoy's reflections in the novel on the psychological impact of dietary prohibitions are omitted. (The less theologically loaded *chazerai* is introduced, though I am mystified by Lehman's failure to make Richard Benjamin pronounce it correctly.) Inevitably, Portnoy's frantic desire to break away from the constricting circle of his Jewish family is made clear in the movie, but his relentless sexual obsession with *shikses,* that lust for otherness tinged with ethnic envy and hostility, is played down, especially since the film version makes no reference to either of his two extended affairs with proper Wasp girls before he meets the Monkey.

In any case, these efforts of discretion on Lehman's part seem to have been unavailing, for the Anti-Defamation League reports that its offices all over the country have been getting complaints about the film, and when Fred Hechinger flatly described it as anti-Semitic in a New York *Times* piece (July 16, 1972), he received a spate of emphatic supporting letters. Although Hechinger's conclusion may be open to question, he makes several shrewd observations about the movie, and in particular about the effect of transfering the novel to the medium of film. "Roth's characters," Hechinger notes about the original *Portnoy*, "were the figment of a deliberately distorted and distorting imagination . . . the exag-

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gerated vision of a childhood unhappily remembered." Because Lehman fails to find any adequate cinematic equivalent for the psychological refraction of the novel's monologue form, "All that emerges is a vulgar and offensive portrait of an unpleasant cast of Jewish characters." Commenting further about the general lifting of taboos on both anti-ethnic humor and on the rendering of bathroom and bedroom activities, Hechinger contends that what has resulted is, alas, not a new unfettered creativity but a new wave of vulgarity, the racial theme regressing "to the minstrel and watermelon level of insights." He aptly observes that Jews are the most inviting target in this new atmosphere of permissiveness "because their greater political sophistication and tolerance make them less likely to strike back than other ethnic power groups." We are, in other words, not yet on the verge of a black *Portnoy's Complaint*.

HECHINGER'S analysis seems to me generally correct, though I would be less certain about applying the anti-Semitic label to the film if we assume that anti-Semitism implies an active hostility toward Jews as a group and an active intention to vilify them. I would rather suspect that the film-maker, working with a literary text that surely expresses a troubled relationship to its Jewish materials, permitted himself through his own dearth of imagination to be trapped by the logic of the medium into magnifying the more unpalatable aspects of his Jewish subjects. A literary fiction is an elaborately mediated representation of experience, allowing through the very nature of the printed word a large intervening distance for the play of the reader's imagination, his private fantasy world, his faculties of judgment and interpretation. In a movie, by contrast, the viewer is caught in the immediate presence and temporal rhythm of the projected image. As it looms in front of him on the screen, he is not free the way a reader is to set it at will in a system of his own perspectives, to invent it behind his own eyes, to manipulate it or redefine it. When we read Roth's novel, we can, through a congeries of printed signs, watch Portnoy looking back at Mama, and there is thus a rightness in her towering over him, say, with the bread-knife, as the all-powerful figure of a vulnerable child's experience, while she remains distanced from us by two removes. In the film, on the other hand, Sophie with her anxious nagging about what goes in and comes out of her son's alimentary canal, Jack shuffling off to the toilet for another futile struggle with his constipation, are unalterably, abrasively *present*, and their heavy vulgarity, their oppressive actualization of negative Jewish stereotypes, do make one distinctly uncomfortable in a way the book does not. Precisely the same element of discomfort, in fact, accompanies Lehman's translation of sexual material from the book to the screen. It is one thing to read about the adolescent Alex's marathon of masturbation; it is quite another actually to see the adult Richard Benjamin—incredibly got-up as a fifteen-year-old—with his face buried in purloined female underpants, supposedly trembling in onanistic ecstasy, though photographed "tastefully," of course, from the shoulders up. The effect is that peculiar sort of artistic embarrassment which seems close to a social embarrassment as well (like inadvertently stepping into an occupied bathroom at a party), and I think it illustrates how we tend to perceive cinematic characters and scenes as much closer, more intrusive, approximations of the social world we inhabit than the images and actions we conjure up for ourselves in the experience of reading fiction.

This quality of insistent immediacy in Lehman's literalistic translation of novel to film tends to strengthen an unfortunate effect which is at least implicit in Roth's novel: the rasping Sophie, and Jack Portnoy with his tired adenoidal whine, loom in our field of vision as though they were definitive portraits of the Jewish mother and father, and as though the parental characters they embody, the psyche-crushing pressures they exert, were uniquely Jewish social pathologies. Some years ago, at the height of the vogue of literary Jewishness, I had occasion to complain in these pages* of a sentimental myth of the Jew which encouraged people to think of certain admired qualities as uniquely Jewish when in fact they were the common property of many groups and cultural traditions. In the changed mood of the past four or five years, a negative complement of that sentimental myth seems to have gained at least limited currency, and we are at times encouraged to perceive as distinctively Jewish certain destructive character-types or qualities which are merely specific Jewish instances of a very widespread human heritage of blight and consternation.

Perhaps I can make the point clearer by citing another striking instance of the archetypal Jewish mother in contemporary fiction. The story I have in mind includes two grown sons, one of whom is an obvious cousin to Alex Portnoy—thirtyish, bald, thin and nervous, futilely intellectual, hopelessly unable to extricate himself from his dependence on his powerful possessive mother. He dreams of going off to Paris or Rome but stays at home commuting to the second-rate university where he teaches. When he even mentions his thoughts of an escape abroad, his mother's cutting response is predictable: "You'd go to those places and you'd get sick. Who in Paris is going to see that you get a salt-free diet? And do you think if you married one of those *shikses* you take out that *she* would cook a salt-free diet for you?" The

*"Sentimentalizing the Jews," September 1965.

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castrating *Yiddishe mamme* here happens to be a true-blue Southern Protestant in a story by a Catholic, Flannery O'Connor ("Greenleaf"), but the only liberty I have taken with the text is to substitute *shikses* for the phrase "odd numbers." In any case, the shabby genteel Mrs. May in Flannery O'Connor's story pronounces "trash" with pretty much the same accent of contempt and self-protective prejudice that one detects in the use of *goyim* by the elder Portnoys, and one gets the distinct impression that the main difference between the mothers is a matter of local terminology, not substantive psychology. The palpable possibility of a Sophie Portnoy on a dairy farm in Georgia—or for that matter, in a worker's flat in Detroit or behind the counter of a hardware store in Sioux City—may suggest that a film like Lehman's on top of a novel like Roth's could exercise a certain limited accuracy of social observation and nevertheless have regrettably misleading implications.

As DISTASTEFUL as such representations of Jews may be, I would hesitate to label them anti-Semitic precisely because our century has seen such abundant and vivid examples of truly anti-Semitic literature and art, in which all Jews are represented as loathsome, subhuman creatures (the rats in Eliot's "Burbank with a Baedeker" gnawing at the foundations of European civilization) whose vile, life-denying, and actually conspiratorial activities would make it a virtue to cleanse humanity of their presence. Most recently, of course, such images of the Jew have been rolling off the presses of Cairo and Damascus, Kiev and Warsaw, but it may well be a sign of our own troubled atmosphere that this sort of obscenity is again in public circulation in America. I refer to a kind of popular culture in comparison with which a film by Ernest Lehman looks like austere high art—birthday cards, supposedly comic posters, and "party jokebooks" in which Jews are consistently represented as prickly-bearded, hideously hook-nosed, money-grubbing, sordidly scheming slobs.

It is not clear what audience these materials could be aimed at or how many people they reach at all. Their mere visibility, however, offers support for the often-asserted claim that a tacit moratorium on vocal anti-Semitism after the Holocaust is now definitively over. It is also not clear to what extent Jews themselves have had a hand in producing this vileness, although the so-called jokes are decidedly those of an outsider, and the specifics of vilification seem weirdly anachronistic as a style of hatred (all Jews drive huge Cadillacs, are physically grotesque, are constantly counting their money, etc.). One prime document, a pamphlet called *It's Fun To Be Jewish,* purports to be the work of a Beverly Hills Jew named Roger Lamanski, but if this is really the case, the production merely illustrates the full perversity of the psychology of self-rejection, how a Jew can bring himself to lap up the poison spread by his own haters.

Lamanski predictably invokes in a preface the age-old self-mockery of Jewish humor as a defense of his pamphlet, but the kind of nastiness he purveys conforms to nothing so much as the classic literature of European anti-Semitism. Here is what he passes off as Jewish humor: "*Q.* What's the difference between a German Jew and a Russian Jew? *A.* Nothing—it depends on what language you want to get gypped in." Or, still worse: "*Q.* Why do old Jews have crooked backs? *A.* From picking up pennies off the sidewalk." The one noticeable addition to the usual formulas of anti-Semitism is the vehemence of hostile attention directed against Jewish women, who are consistently depicted as garrulous, thick-lipped, fat-assed bitches. Thus: "*Q.* Why do Jewish women close their eyes while they're making love? *A.* They can't stand to see their husbands enjoying themselves." If this sounds vile, I can only say that the *Stuermer*-style cartoons accompanying the gags are far viler, the written text often seeming merely an excuse for the release of a much greater energy of vilification in the drawings.

The defamation here of Jewish women, one might observe, jibes nicely with the recent treatment of the "Jewish Princess" as a comic butt on television and in print. Julie Baumgold's *New York* magazine piece on the subject (March 22, 1971), like the Mel Brooks television slurs on which it builds, is infinitely more "sophisticated" than the Lamanski pamphlet, but its snide contempt for its subject is quite relentless, and the effort to make a blanket case against Jewish women in general links it with the defamatory jokebooks and cards. The intensity of spitefulness is as strong in the magazine piece as in the less reputable literature of defamation. "For one thing," Baumgold writes of the Jewish Princess, "she *expects.* No bum in fingerless gloves ever picked through a trash basket with more expectation." At least a bit of such a character, we are asked to believe, exists in "every Jewish girl," now and in all times, from the haughty daughters of Zion in Isaiah to Durrell's Justine, Marjorie Morningstar, and beyond. Like the anti-Semitic pamphleteer, Baumgold lays stress on the vocation of the Jewish woman as a calculating sexual withholder. Her approving quotation of Mel Brooks on this subject typifies the tone and substance of her own attack: "[The Jewish Princess] is familiar with the nuances of the *Kama Sutra* and the *Story of O* . . . but a finger on a private part is punishable by death."

It is worth noting that these self-styled exercises in Jewish humor, whether conducted by Jewish or Gentile anti-Semites, very readily move into the conspiratorial notions that lie at the heart of classic anti-Semitism. The grasping old Jews

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—they must be old, for reasons Norman Cohn has made persuasively clear in his Freudian interpretation of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—grasp not only for themselves but for some sinister network of Jewish capital. Thus, a birthday card that uses mostly the same material as *It's Fun To Be Jewish* answers the question, why are Jews so interested in politics, with "They hold a mortgage on the White House," a joke that plays not only on supposed Jewish avarice but also on the idea, as in the *Protocols*, that Jewish wealth exerts secret power in the highest places. A specifically racial fear of a Jewish takeover is reflected in the same card's attribution to all Jews of a secret ambition to turn St. Patrick's Cathedral into a synagogue and make Sammy Davis, Jr. the cantor. The reference to St. Patrick's might be a clue to the ethnic origin of this particular joke, but in any case the attempt at humor reveals a real uneasiness over the prospect of a contaminating influx of mingled inferior races, kikes and niggers, into the sancta of white America.

The most perfect illustration I have seen of the persistent conspiracy theory, old poisons reheated for new political situations, is a poster with the caption, "Ski Israel—Matzoh Mountain Country," issued by Action Decal and Silkscreen, a Chicago firm, and signed, D. Booty. In a graphics style worthy of the infamous Soviet anti-Semitic publication, *Judaism without Embellishment*, a simian, cigar-smoking, hang-lipped, pot-bellied Jew in military attire is represented riding down a slope using two prostrate, tearful Arabs as skis. His pocket is stuffed with bonds, on his chest he wears a decoration labeled "Iron Beygel," and he is shoving into the faces of the hapless Arabs a huge submachine gun (it appears to jut out from between his legs) with "Marx" clearly lettered on the barrel. As the manifestations of paranoiac hatred of the Jews have by now taught us to expect, the international Jewish conspiracy is imagined as a hydra-headed thing, easily embodying the most contradictory opposites—here, not only Communism and capitalism but neo-Nazism to boot.

I DO not mean by citing these documents to suggest that there is anything like an incipient wave of mass anti-Semitism in America, though it does seem to me worth noting that the most potent expressions of anti-Semitism do exist in some manner as a contemporary American phenomenon, much as we like to consign them mentally to past eras or to the hate-spewing propaganda machines of Arab and Communist dictatorships. It may well be that the resurfacing of jokebook anti-Semitism has been encouraged by the same indulgent climate in which some film-makers, journalists, television writers, and comedians have felt free to capitalize at length on negative stereotypes of Jews. Nevertheless, the existence side by side of the two phenomena points up their essential difference, for to magnify recognizably unpleasant aspects of certain kinds of Jews is different in intention and generally different in effect from turning all Jews into odious vermin insidiously infecting mankind. The Lehman-to-Lamanski spectrum in any case raises a problem of practical response. One surely wants to excoriate misrepresentations of Jews that are venomous and destructive, and it is equally legitimate to state one's emphatic objections to representations that are merely quite distasteful and potentially damaging, but the last thing we should think of as Jews is to try to impose an unofficial censorship, that is, to try to discourage all forms of criticism, including what might be genuine self-scrutiny. The line, of course, between criticism and denigration is not always clear, is likely to depend in some degree on where you stand when you try to look at it, but to get a balanced view of this whole question, it may be helpful to consider a couple of examples on the other side of the elusive line of distinction.

Lenny Bruce's famous bit about Christ and Moses making the West Coast Reform temple scene—"drive-in *shul*, Frank Lloyd Wright *shul* . . . West Coast Reform *shul*, Reform rabbi; so reformed they're ashamed they're Jewish"—is a knife-thrust that has a sharpness and purpose quite beyond all the current humor about Jewish parents hovering over toilets and Jewish women munching overstuffed sandwiches. The crucial difference begins, I suspect, with some positive sense of involvement, not entrapment, in the Jewish condition. Out of his own unabashed Jewishness, out of his working knowledge that being a Jew could provide him certain distinctive resources for seeing and saying things as they are, Bruce perceived that what makes Jews really contemptible is their lust to deny themselves. To expose Jewish vulgarity or even Jewish parochialism is to engage with surface phenomena that in any case cover only part of the surface of American-Jewish life; to expose the dishonesty of Jews about their own historical identity goes to the root of the uneasiness underlying Jewish existence in this country. Bruce's satire can be merciless, but it usually seems clean and right because it moves to the essential point. Thus: "Not many Jews feel hostility towards Goldwater 'cause he is Jewish and changed his religion. See, *all* Jews did that." Or, more poignantly, at the end of the West Coast Reform temple routine:"Moses is depressed. The *shuls* are gone. No more *shuls*. He breaks open a *mezuzah*—nothing inside—*gevalt*!—but a piece of paper that says, 'Made in Japan.'" Now, Bruce was by no stretch of the term a religious Jew, but he was capable of realizing imaginatively that the essence of being a Jew historically was not a particular configuration of family life or a particular set of social mannerisms but a people's ongoing commitment to a covenant with God. In the light

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of that awareness, he invents a perfect symbol for the painful contradiction of being a Jew without faith who maintains the pretense of unbroken continuity with the past—a *mezuzah* that encloses not divine words inscribed on parchment but a printed label, "Made in Japan."

Bruce also directed his satire on occasion at the more strictly social failings of Jews, but even in these instances I think the tenor and tone of his critique are something very different from denigration. Here it is important to stress that what counts most is not the social fact observed but how it is stated. Thus, the jokebooks and greeting cards work over the my-son-the-doctor cliché in a way that is flat as humor and sour as social commentary ("*Q*. Why are all Jews either doctors, lawyers, or dentists? *A*. It sounds funny saying, 'My son Irving the truckdriver.' "). By contrast, Bruce exploits an element of sharp surprise in alluding to the same social fact in a manic counterattack against Christians who ask Jews why they killed Christ—"We killed him because he didn't want to become a doctor, that's why we killed him." This is wonderful precisely because it is so outrageous, and the outrageousness cuts in two directions, both of them reinforced by the unblushing use of the Jewish "we." On the one hand, the sudden punch line suggests, we crucify our children when they do not conform to our expectations, and under the high compression of wit, there is all the anguish of a Portnoyesque son suffering parental insistence and cultural coercion. The historical issue, on the other hand, is also underscored by the absurdity of the statement: Jews, whose characteristic "crime" has been to want too restrictively for their children, have been murderously pursued over the centuries by a Christian world that denounced them as Christ-killers. Either way, what comes across is not a sneering put-down of "all Jews" but a shrewd perception of the moral discrepancies of the Jewish predicament made out of a clear involvement in that predicament.

Jews can be a good deal rougher on themselves than this without any governing impulse of self-hatred. In order to make the general principle clearer, I would like to offer a more elaborate example in which criticism is far more vehement, obviously much closer to the line of denigration. To set against that hideous joke about old Jews bending over for pennies, I shall quote a passage from the master Yiddish and Hebrew satirist, Mendele Mocher Seforim, that also attributes a mercenary character to the Jews. This satiric set-piece occurs in a Hebrew story called "Unease in Jacob," first published in 1892. Language, unfortunately, is absolutely essential to Mendele's satiric method, so my translation can give only a dim approximation of Mendele's opulently allusive Hebrew, with its sudden twists from mock-sublime diction to rude familiarity and grotesquerie. The story portrays a conniving *shtetl* potentate named Jacob who has risen from a mere creeping thing—"Thou worm, Jacob"—to power in the community, a seat by the east wall of the synagogue, and the honorific title, Reb Yakov.

> Gold has plugged up his heart and his brain. The faculty of memory was now filled by a silver shekel, and in every single place in heart or brain where there had once been a little honesty, a particle of compassion, a trace of human feeling, the slightest creaturely understanding, there now lay—a coin. Every one of his five senses was served by the coin: he saw, heard, tasted, smelled, felt only the coin, and his soul was one beaten work of pure gold. This is the way of Jews, the nature imbued in them from time immemorial, that whenever they see a fellow with a gold coin, let him be what he will, even a calf, a beast in human form—he becomes their god, and they bow down to him, dance and frolic before him, giving glory to his name. His followers praise him in the town, calling him *Reb Yakov!*, and all the people answer after them in awe, "Blessed be his glorious name," and they, too, say, "Reb Yakov!"

All this is done so abundantly with the stylistic zest characteristic of Mendele that it is not easy to separate the energy of searing contempt from the delight in sheer play with language, but a few particular observations can be made. The *shtetl* society was in fact one in which social victimization of the penniless by the wealthy and economic parasitism (Reb Yakov's sycophantic followers) were very prominent features. To these Mendele responded with a deep sense of moral outrage, typically expressing it, as here, in that cadenced rhetoric of formal denunciation, heavily wrought with anaphora and explicit appeals to feeling, which was often the vehicle of social indignation in the 19th-century novel (in English one thinks of Dickens). The open assault on Reb Yakov, the very type and figure of the exploitative rich Jew, is relentless—in the story, it goes on for several pages more. The question about this sort of animus in Mendele, a question in fact raised by some contemporary Hebrew critics, is whether it is not anti-Semitic, denigrating our East-European forebears by fixing to them the very accusations invented by their persecutors. The passage we are considering, after all, even moves on from its immediate satiric target to a generalization about the readiness of Jews from time immemorial to abase themselves in the presence of gold.

I do not want to argue that the mere fact of writing in a Jewish language guarantees some sort of moral *hechsher*, some seal of rabbinic approval, for there are surely striking documents of self-hatred in both Hebrew and Yiddish. If, however, as I have suggested, a key to the distinction between denigration and criticism is a sense of positive involvment in the group being crit-

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icized, the choice of a specifically Jewish language will at least make such a sense considerably more likely, both because of the implied audience and the minutely ramified implication of the language in the historical experience of the people. In the passage from Mendele, the controlling metaphor is of course the biblical episode of the worship of the golden calf, and the way that is handled seems to me to make the passage finally different in kind from the anti-Semitic cartoons of money-counting Jews. Mendele's use of the golden calf is properly homiletic, or midrashic, the biblical experience serving as a paradigm for how Jews through the ages have been prone to subvert their own highest values. Yet it is precisely in behalf of those values that Mendele conducts his attack, stigmatizing Jewish subservience to wealth as a despicable idolatry in which the sort of adulation appropriate to God alone—"Blessed be his glorious name!"—is given to undeserving man, all the people answering after the bootlickers of the rich in awe as the holy congregation of Israel once answered after the high priest when he pronounced the ineffable Name.

The idea of a people subverting its own values, even repeatedly, over the centuries, implies that those values still have some imperative claim on the people. The language itself embodies that claim in its allusive structures that point to a world of realized monotheistic devotion and lend themselves to ironic reversal directed against the godforsaking cult of man and self. In other words, what Mendele's satire, however abrasive, suggests is a dynamic interplay between powerful forces of corruption and the commitment to decency within Jewish society. In truly denigrating representations of Jews, by contrast, the negative attributes are considered as fixed and absolute: Jews are crass and money-grubbing because that is a characteristic of the species, like the fact that moles live underground; all Jewish mothers smother their children with vulgarly possessive love because that is what they are by definition, as all marsupial mothers by definition carry their young in pouches. Mendele's *oeuvre* does try to develop a generalized characterology of *shtetl* society in a manner not at all in keeping with the practices of modern fiction, but the very attempt to represent a whole society from within means that he can see in it a wide range of types, an interplay of opposing forces, even if the lopsided, precarious socioeconomic structure of the society repeatedly bred certain characteristic social ills. Unlike the entrapped Jew struggling resentfully to break away from his Jewish origins, or the detractor standing outside, Mendele sees Jewish social evils as *process*, not as static, unchanging fact. The struggle between Moses and the worshipers of the calf may be reenacted in every generation, but the essential idea of struggle is implicit in the biblical tale; even Reb Yakov began with some human feeling, his progressive dehumanization being set forth as the product of a process he allowed to occur.

OBVIOUSLY, no artistic representation of a manifold social reality can give us the whole truth about it, especially not when the art is satiric and thus bent on exposing what is most reprehensible in its subject. It could be, for example, that Norman Jewison's film version of *Fiddler on the Roof*—at the opposite pole from Lehman's *Portnoy* and, interestingly, made by a Gentile director—faithfully renders certain endearing qualities of *shtetl* life whose existence could not be guessed from reading Mendele. The cinematic *Fiddler*, I should say, is not nearly so sentimental as one might have expected and retains a surprising degree of Sholem Aleichem's realism: there is a real pogrom (if a rather tame one), real poverty (though Tevye's house does not look nearly like the hovel it should be), real erosion of traditional values. At the same time, one gets a strong, even convincing sense of the warmth and fellow-feeling, the distinctive humor, the family solidarity, that made inner survival possible under those dire circumstances and that for the most part lie outside the Juvenalian lash of a satirist like Mendele. What I would stress is that we cannot dispense with either kind of truth. The truth of celebration may justifiably kindle a warm glow in the breasts of Jewish audiences, but Jewish life was not altogether a poignant parade in technicolor dazzle accompanied by Isaac Stern on the violin, and so a harsher truth is also needed.

"People should be taught what is, not what should be." Bruce's simple formulation is apt, for one might note that there is a negative as well as a positive "should be," denigration of any group tending to elevate its supposed negative qualities to the level of unchanging myth. Things as they are may often be bad enough, and their exposure could in fact open the floodgates to "destruction and despair." When the exposure, however, is shrewdly accurate, when it is not made out of a sense of alienated withdrawal from the objects of the satire, the destruction effected is the kind on which perhaps something may still be built, for the tearing down is a moment of painful self-knowledge as well.

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America, Rome, and the Bourgeoisie

William S. Pechter

THE EMIGRANTS is an almost three-hour-long Swedish saga about a mid-19th-century migration of peasants to America, made by a director, Jan Troell, who is his own photographer, and who composes each shot with the care an artist might give to his canvas. Which is to say that I had every reason not to like it, and yet I admired it greatly. The usual compliment paid to films of its length is that it seemed shorter than it was, but, in fact, *The Emigrants* seemed longer, even years longer, and yet I found myself hoping (at several points where I thought it might be ending) that it would go on longer.

If I ended by being thoroughly swept up in the narrative of the film, what first drew me resistingly into it was not that but its look. Though generally I dislike films so obviously attentive to the beauty of their visual composition, I gradually became aware—roughly about the time of the Renoiresque first shot of Liv Ullmann on a swing—that *The Emigrants* was not merely (cf. Visconti, Losey, *et al.*) a film striving for beautiful images but one in the act of achieving them. And though the visual composition of the film is exactingly planned, one doesn't sense it (cf. Eisenstein) as either posed or emotionally constricting. The images of *The Emigrants* may be exceedingly controlled, but its emotional life flows freely from them; indeed, much as one may speak of a Peckinpah liberating the aesthetic of editing from its Eisensteinian rigidities, so, too, does *The Emigrants* redeem the values of the composition of the individual image.

And the emphasis on composition is right for *The Emigrants*, with its attempt—rather like that of *Shane*, however odd the comparison may seem at first—to fix permanently the essence of a central mythos of a people's history in a kind of frieze at once historical and timeless. By which I mean not that the characters, however much they are imagined as types, are flat or lifeless, but that they are kept somewhat remote from us, idealized and larger than life; their capacity to suffer and endure and to persevere in a simple faith seems both distinctly human and unalterably beyond us. The life they are to leave in Sweden ebbs away: crops fail, children die, a barn and its precious hoard are destroyed by fire. But though they are slow in reaching their decision to emigrate, leaving only after the weight of years of hardship and diminishing prospects has been piled crushingly on them, once they have made their resolve, their unshakable determination to reach their promised land is awesome.

The Emigrants is about the idea of America, about America as an idea, and the observation is no less true for being trite that at present probably no American could have made it. This is true not only of the details: there is a sequence once the characters have reached America in which the principal couple's child gets separated from them as their river boat is about to leave port which wonderfully conveys, without any symbolic baggage, the panic-stricken experience of being imprisoned by a foreign language and unable to communicate in a moment of desperate need. But what I mean even more than

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this is that probably no American could have come to *The Emigrants*' subject at present with such confidence and equanimity, without either shrill chauvinism on the one hand or bitter irony on the other. When the settlers do finally reach America, it is an Eden in which ironies abound, but they are simply there, unstressed and matter-of-factly: the snake-oil salesmen, social stratification, slaves; at one point, one of the new settlers, a dissenting minister, exclaims with ingenuous wonderment, as he reads the legend, "In God We Trust," on a coin, at the exemplary piety of a people who "put their creed on their money."

Yet, essentially, what *The Emigrants* conveys is not the failure of a faith but its power: the sense of what it must have been like fully to believe in that idea of a land where men might live unshackled and expansively, in perfect freedom. It is an idea no less powerful for the fact of its attainment forever receding; when the emigrant party finally lands at New York, after a voyage of almost unendurable misery, one of the first things to be seen is a posted handbill proclaiming the lure of yet a new El Dorado: California. Some of the party press on to California, others stop short of it; and, for all the movie's possible endings, it couldn't have chosen a more beautiful moment on which actually to end than that of Max von Sydow's beatific smile as he decides he has reached the place where he will settle. But in both those who go on and those who drop off along the way, the faith in an America burns with a fierce intensity. It is an intensity such as to fill us with shame for all the facile derision of American ideals of which I suspect all of us have occasionally been guilty. And it fills one with shame also for the ways those ideals have been failed.

THOUGH much of its detail is already lost to me, I rather liked Fellini's next-to-last film, *The Clowns*. In its modest way, it seemed a sign of self-renewal, a self-renewal in its very modesty after the bloated wreck of the *Satyricon*. By now, however, searching Fellini's work for signs of self-renewal requires a greater gullibility than any long-time Fellini-watcher should be capable of. *8½*, too, signaled self-renewal, and was immediately cheapened into the male half of a his-and-hers set by *Juliet of the Spirits*. So, too, with the director's-journal form which helped keep *The Clowns* to its modest proportions: here, in *Fellini's Roma*, it has become the pretext for self-indulgence run rampant. It seems that outside every lean Fellini film is a fat Fellini film waiting to get in.

That fat film is by now so formularized as to have become almost a genre in itself: the "Fellini film." With it comes invariably the familiar entourage: the priests, fat whores, ham actors, music-hall performers, Earth Mamas, greasy lady-killers and their female counterparts, androgynes, grotesques, freaks, carrion journalists, and (lately) movie-makers. The stock company has by now grown so formalized, its members' appearances so conventionalized, as to be available to almost anyone. "Let's make a Fellini film," a director might say, and evoke as firm a mental image as if he had said, "Let's make a Western." And indeed, watching *Fellini's Roma*, one can almost imagine its origin in Fellini himself deciding: "Let's make a Fellini film; let's give Rome the full Fellini treatment." Only by this time self-reference has become virtually indistinguishable from self-parody. And things which, in the work of other film-makers, once seemed like imitation Fellini (like the *Walpurgisnacht* in Mike Nichols's *Catch-22*) now reappear in Fellini's own work (the extended tour of a high-volume whorehouse in *Roma*) and look like imitation Mike Nichols.

Writing of Fellini in 1963, I described him as, with Kurosawa, probably the most erratic of those usually considered to be among the world's most important film-makers, but erratic is no longer the word for it. Of his films, *8½* is the last which might defensibly be called major, and that work was itself preceded by years of floundering. But since *8½*: a failure with *Juliet of the Spirits*, with *Fellini Satyricon*, and now with *Roma*; one minor success with *The Clowns;* and only one brief return to former brilliance in *Toby Dammit*, Fellini's contribution to the omnibus *Spirits of the Dead*, and a last blooming of the rich fruitiness of Fellini's late style before its relapse into the oily virtuosity of *Roma*. (Generally, with the notable exception of *8½*, Fellini's work has been little served by his increasing virtuosity; the earlier works may lack the technical dazzle of the later ones, but they have all the technique they need, and one feels of them, as one doesn't of the later works, that technique and expressiveness achieve a parity.) And increasingly the director's fixation on the decline and fall of the Roman empire (with Fellini, as someone has remarked, emceeing the apocalypse) begins to seem less a vision of the world and of a subject than an only half-acknowledged projection of the artist's own loss of creative vitality. Compared with the ferocious blasphemy of Bellocchio's *In Nome del Padre* (which is probably to 1971 what *Days and Nights in the Forest* was to 1970: the year's best foreign-language film, and still unreleased), the "ecclesiastical fashion show" in *Roma* is the feeblest of anti-clerical tittering; and the apocalypse itself, one suspects, is of interest chiefly as it provides a spectacular show, the director's misanthropy less a Swiftian disgust with humankind than a distaste for its cosmetic blemishes. And with the surrender of subject comes the rise of narcissism and of fetishistic "self-expression." Though, unlike Pauline Kael, I didn't object to Fellini casting Mastroianni as the director in *8½*, since Fellini and the character didn't seem to me finally equatable, I do balk at seeing the young Fellini in *Roma* impersonated by some girlishly beautiful male starlet, as I do also at the phenomenon of the artist's name (*Fellini Satyricon, Fellini's Roma*) now sharing billing with his subject in his works' titles.

But not only is Fellini now able apparently to manufacture fraud-

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ulent self-renewals at will, he is actually able to palm off his essays in egomania as exercises in modesty—fleeting images and tentative impressions, randomly culled from the director's notebook: "My first childhood memory of Rome is. . . ," etc. This is sham and charlatanism of an almost admirably brazen order. That Fellini is capable of an ironic awareness of the role he has chosen to play can be seen both throughout *8½* and in the very funny moment in *The Clowns* when a journalist inquires, "Signor Fellini, what is the message of your film?" and, as Fellini begins to reply ("My message is . . ."), he is silenced by a bucket dropping over his head. In *Roma,* the director is far too clever to be caught delivering messages, deferring instead to Gore Vidal, who, fawned on as a Celebrity, launches glibly into his well-worn waiting-for-the-end number. Unfortunately, no one drops a bucket over his head.

BUÑUEL on Fellini: "Up to *La Dolce Vita,* Fellini was one of the directors whom I found most interesting. Now he's always playing the genius. I saw *Juliet*; it's worthless. Neither true nor false surrealism, nothing."

Surrealism is alive and potent in *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie.* Buñuel's *The Exterminating Angel* of 1962 had as its premise a dinner party that inexplicably couldn't be ended; *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* is constructed of a series of dinner parties that cannot be consummated, the meals all interrupted and either not begun or left half-eaten. Somehow *The Exterminating Angel* never quite worked (except in its parts); the device seemed either distractingly supernatural, or allegory arbitrarily imposed by the director on his characters. The device of *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie,* however, works brilliantly. Each incident flows casually and "naturally" from the one before with the compelling logic of a dream; and, in fact, much of the latter part of the film is cast in the form of a series of interlocking dreams, encompassing that of one character dreaming he is participating in the dream of another. But it is, I think, fruitless to speculate, as one critic has, that the entire film is to be taken as the dream of the character whom we see last awaken, nor is there anything to be gained from Buñuel's work generally by playing *Marienbad* games: trying to distinguish dream from "reality." Buñuel's work in its entirety, however much it is fundamentally within a tradition of narrative realism, is filled with elements of the fantastic, and I wouldn't want to demystify a work such as *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* even if I could. Who, after all, awakens from the dream of *Un Chien Andalou* or *Land Without Bread* or *Los Olvidados?* Or to put it another way: the dream is ours.

The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie opens on the ultimate in bourgeois tragedy (a mode in which pity and terror are replaced by embarrassment): guests arriving for a dinner party on the wrong day, and catching their hostess by surprise. An impromptu decision to repair to a neighboring restaurant proves no more satisfying; it is "under new management," and as the characters (two married couples—the husband of one, that evening's supposed host, absent—the younger sister of one of the wives, and the ambassador of Miranda, a mythical South American country) prepare to order, conversing enthusiastically about food and wine, the meal is aborted by sobs which distract them to an alcove where the manager's corpse is laid out to await a tardy undertaker. The next day, the two husbands visit the Mirandan embassy to arrange another date to dine. While they are there, the ambassador spies from his window a girl selling wind-up toys on the street, and shoots one with a rifle causing the girl to flee; she is, he explains, a terrorist from Miranda. He tells them he is reluctant to call in the police because of a recent incident in which they attempted to search his diplomatic pouch—shortly before, the American ambassador's diplomatic pouch was searched and found to contain 80 pounds of cocaine—and his friends sympathize indignantly. He then produces 30 pounds of cocaine from his own pouch, which they proceed to test for purity before concluding a cash transaction. Some concern is expressed about the threat posed by a gang from Marseilles. The ambassador says he intends to invest his share of the money where the other two have—not in Miranda. "What's the rate of the Deutsche mark?"

The guests arrive for the rearranged luncheon. This time, host and hostess are there, but about to make love, and send word, via an impeccably imperturbable maid, that they will be down shortly. The guests amuse themselves with the husband's lecture-demonstration on the art of mixing a dry martini while the ambassador clandestinely fondles the wife's neck, the entertainment concluding with their inviting the ambassador's chauffeur in to join them in a drink. ("That's what shouldn't be done with a dry martini.") Meanwhile, host and hostess have decided to leave the house to make love (he tells her she makes too much noise for them to stay), and are observed by the maid, unflappable as ever, as they climb down from their second-story window and run into the bushes, the latest comic instance of that motif of *l'amour fou* which recurs throughout Buñuel's work from *Un Chien Andalou* and *L'Age d'Or* on. When the maid casually mentions to the guests that their hosts have left in a hurry, they express fear that the lot of them have been denounced to the police, and they, too, flee.

A bishop arrives, tipping his hat to the departing guests, and asks to see the people of the house. Told by the maid they are out, he goes to the gardener's shed, where, with a strange gleam in his eye, he examines the gardening tools and work clothes. The host and hostess return, annoyed to find their guests have left. The doorbell rings; it is the bishop, in gardener's clothes, who introduces himself to them as the bishop of their diocese. They throw him out. A few minutes later, he returns in full clerical

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garb, graciously accepts their apologies, and applies for the job of their gardener; the church has changed, he explains, and, just as they've heard of worker-priests, so, too, are there worker-bishops. Does he know how to do the work? Yes, his parents, who were murdered, had had an experienced gardener, and the bishop learned everything from him. The question of pay? Union scale; but it seems the previous gardener had been non-union. "Perhaps," the bishop replies firmly, "but I live by the rules." The sequence gives way to a shot of the characters—the two couples, sister, and ambassador—walking down a long country road stretching into the distance.

Alice in Wonderland, yes, and no more so than in these first few sequences of the film. The women pay a visit to a tea room, which is out of every beverage except water, where a "sad lieutenant" formally presents himself to inquire, "Madam, did you have a happy childhood? My own childhood was tragic. May I tell you about it?"—and then proceeds to tell them the story of how his mother's ghost persuaded him to kill "the man who calls himself your father." A dinner party is suddenly augmented by some marijuana-smoking military officers on maneuvers, and talk turns to marijuana-smoking by the American soldiers in Vietnam (the result is that once a week they bomb their own troops, someone observes; "if they bomb their own troops, they must have a good reason," a colonel replies). The dinner with the officers is interrupted by an urgent message that the war games have begun, brought by a sergeant who nevertheless "has a very curious dream to tell," and does so at length while all attend; "tell us the train dream, too," one of the officers requests at the first dream's conclusion, but they decide to "keep the train for some other time." A return invitation from the colonel brings them to a dinner table where they suddenly find themselves on a stage, a curtain rising, and a prompter feeding them lines while an audience looks on. ("God, what am I doing here?" one of them exclaims in panic as the audience jeers and the others flee. "I don't know the lines!") The final dream—it is the ambassador's—concludes with three men (Mirandan terrorists? Marseilles gangsters?—the candidates are legion) bursting in on yet another dinner party and machine-gunning all, except for the ambassador, hiding under the table until he gives himself away by extending his arm to get a slice of perfectly-cooked lamb. The ambassador awakens, makes for his refrigerator, and begins to eat voraciously. The film ends with the third punctuation of the action by shots of the characters, a bit rumpled perhaps but not really downcast, walking down their endless road.

Alice in Wonderland, yes, but with a difference: for this cuckoo clock of a movie has something added ticking in it. Writing of Buñuel a few years ago, I argued that (but for the short *Simon of the Desert*) none of his deliberately light or playful films was as funny as his darker ones, a claim which I'm happy to admit *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* stands on its head. It *is* light and playful, and yet no other Buñuel film has been funnier, or, despite its leisurely pace, more densely packed, or (even if it lacks one single great performance on the order of *El* or *Nazarin*) better acted from top to bottom, or more rigorous formally (organized, in this case, around pairs or doublings—of murdered fathers, ghostly mothers, gardeners, etc.—and their symmetry).

What *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* is, in fact, is a masterpiece by one of the half-dozen or so great artists to have worked in films. (If it astonishes me to realize, on reflection, that five of those on my own short list of six are still living, it depresses me even more to realize that only two of them are still working.) Until now, I've had at least slight reservations about all the films Buñuel has made since *Simon of the Desert* in 1965; something driven seems to have gone out of even the best of them, *Tristana*; they showed signs of mellowing, but, if a film such as *The Milky Way* is mellow, it is so at a price.

The Buñuel of *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* has mellowed, but in a way to cause me to wonder that, if his later films seem less the product of an incendiary rage than his earlier ones, it may be only that their fuse is longer and more coiled. *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* is Buñuel's tribute to an adversary; the title is both ironic and not; these people really do, in their total insulation from the world beyond their dinner table, their imperviousness to all but their own creature comforts, exude a certain childlike charm. And, however grudgingly, Buñuel clearly does admire their resilience; in the end, despite every threat to their well-being, the bourgeoisie march indefatigably on.

Yet one cannot fail to see that the precarious world these moral idiots and their servants tenaciously inhabit, and shape to their own image, is hell. It's a sunnier, less oppressive hell than any in Buñuel's films before, filled with good wine and food (at least in prospect) and convivial small talk —a world, however cockeyed it is seen, not unlike our own. But it is hell.

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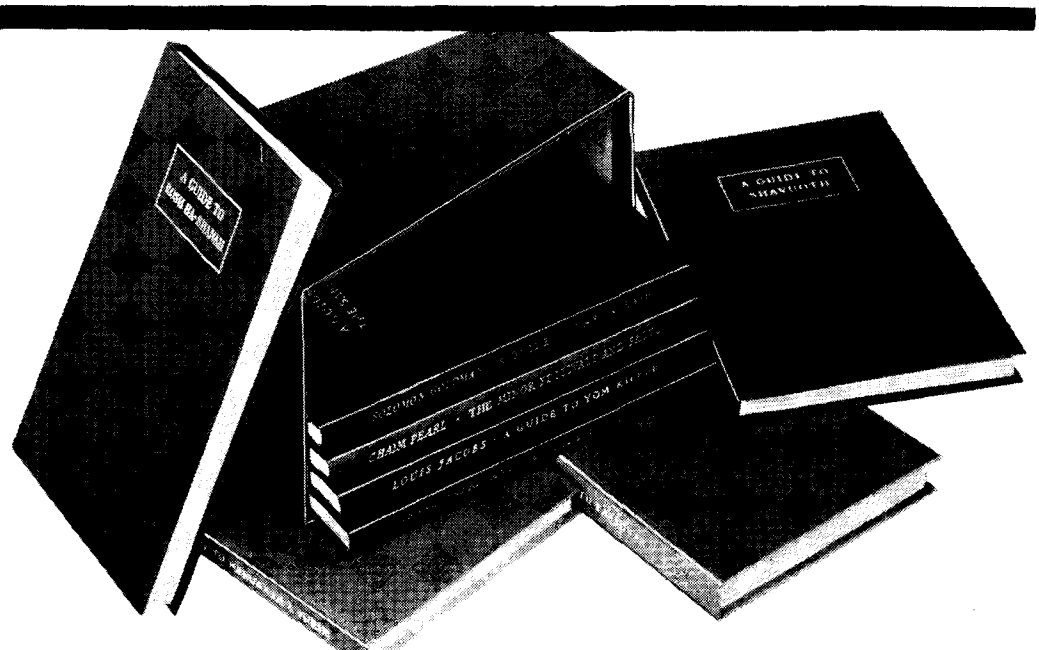

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Books in Review

Social Theorist

THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE POWERS AND OTHER ESSAYS. By EDWARD SHILS. *University of Chicago Press. 481 pp. $12.50.*

Reviewed by JAMES Q. WILSON

THE great tradition of Western sociological thought has been preoccupied, not with the family, small groups, occupations, or any of the other specialties into which the current sociology curriculum may be divided, but rather with explaining the governing institutions of society, the sources of their legitimacy, and the contradictions and evolutionary processes in which they are embedded. Sociological theory, as practiced by its masters, has been political sociology (even when, as with Marx, what is "political" is derived from what is economic), so much so that it has been almost indistinguishable in focus, if not in language, from political philosophy. Graduate students may debate the fact-value distinction, or accuse one another of either dustbin empiricism or moralistic attitudinizing, but far above that debate there endures the legacy of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, thoroughly intertwined with the teachings of Hobbes, Mill, Rousseau, and Burke.

Edward Shils is one of the world's most distinguished social theorists in the grand tradition—a bit of praise no doubt likely to set off a burst of his well-known temper. The present volume, the first in a series that will bring together his selected papers, is an important event, not only for the interest of the papers themselves, but because Shils has never published (though he has probably written) a major book, other than perhaps *Toward a General Theory of Action,* of which he was co-author and co-editor with Talcott Parsons. Because of his reluctance to bring forth a single systematic piece of writing, he is not as well-known to the general public as he deserves to be, or as his great influence on British and American scholars merits.

Shils, who divides his time between the University of Chicago and Cambridge University, edits *Minerva* ("A review of science, learning, and policy") and has served for some time on the editorial board of *Encounter.* But he has no doctoral degree, rarely supervises a Ph.D. dissertation, is a member of no government commissions, and rarely appears on the pages of the more familiar literary and policy journals in this country. Nonetheless, his standing as one of the leading intellectuals of the English-speaking world is absolutely secure, and for the simplest of reasons: he has addressed himself, with immense erudition, to some of the major issues of contemporary society.

His first volume of essays is concerned with the most important of these issues: the nature of the intellectual calling, and the relationship between that calling and the coherence of society. Max Weber, whose influence on Shils was profound, described in *Economy and Society* the central tendency of modern societies as the growing rationalization of corporate and public life, the emergence of bureaucratic centers of power, and the stratification of society along lines of class (i.e., the distribution of income), status (the distribution of honor), and party (the distribution of political power). This rationalization and these principles of stratification were influenced by objective conditions, but (in disagreement with Marx) did not derive exclusively from them: what people *believe,* and especially what they believe to be the legitimate basis of authority, is crucial in understanding the development of their political, and even their economic, institutions.

Weber himself never gave a systematic account of the sources of those beliefs, other than to stress the importance of their religious and ceremonial foundations, as suggested by the title of his best-known work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.* But even as Weber wrote, the religious tradition of Western society had begun to fade and secularism was making relentless advances. In his analysis of bureaucratic organization he thought that political authority could derive from the mere fact that officials held offices made legitimate by the "legal-rational" rules defining the powers and limits of the organization.

FOR Shils, it is to a great extent the modern intellectuals who both shape (in the long run) the bases of political authority and who by their fitful participation in governmental institutions create new forms of authority—that of "expertise" as opposed to mere office. Intellectuals have thus exerted two partially inconsistent forces in both modern and backward societies: that of redefining the nature of the sacred and of operating, on the basis of professional (and thus allegedly arcane) knowledge, the institutions of a complex technological society.

Shils did not come to these concerns by reflecting on theoretical matters but by observing what was happening about him. In the 1920's and 1930's, he asked the question that since has governed all his writings on intellectuals: "Why did the writers, historians, philosophers, and other intellectuals . . . feel such revulsion for their own societies, for the institutions through which they were

JAMES Q. WILSON, *professor of government at Harvard, is the author of, among other works,* Amateur Democrat *and* Varieties of Police Behavior.

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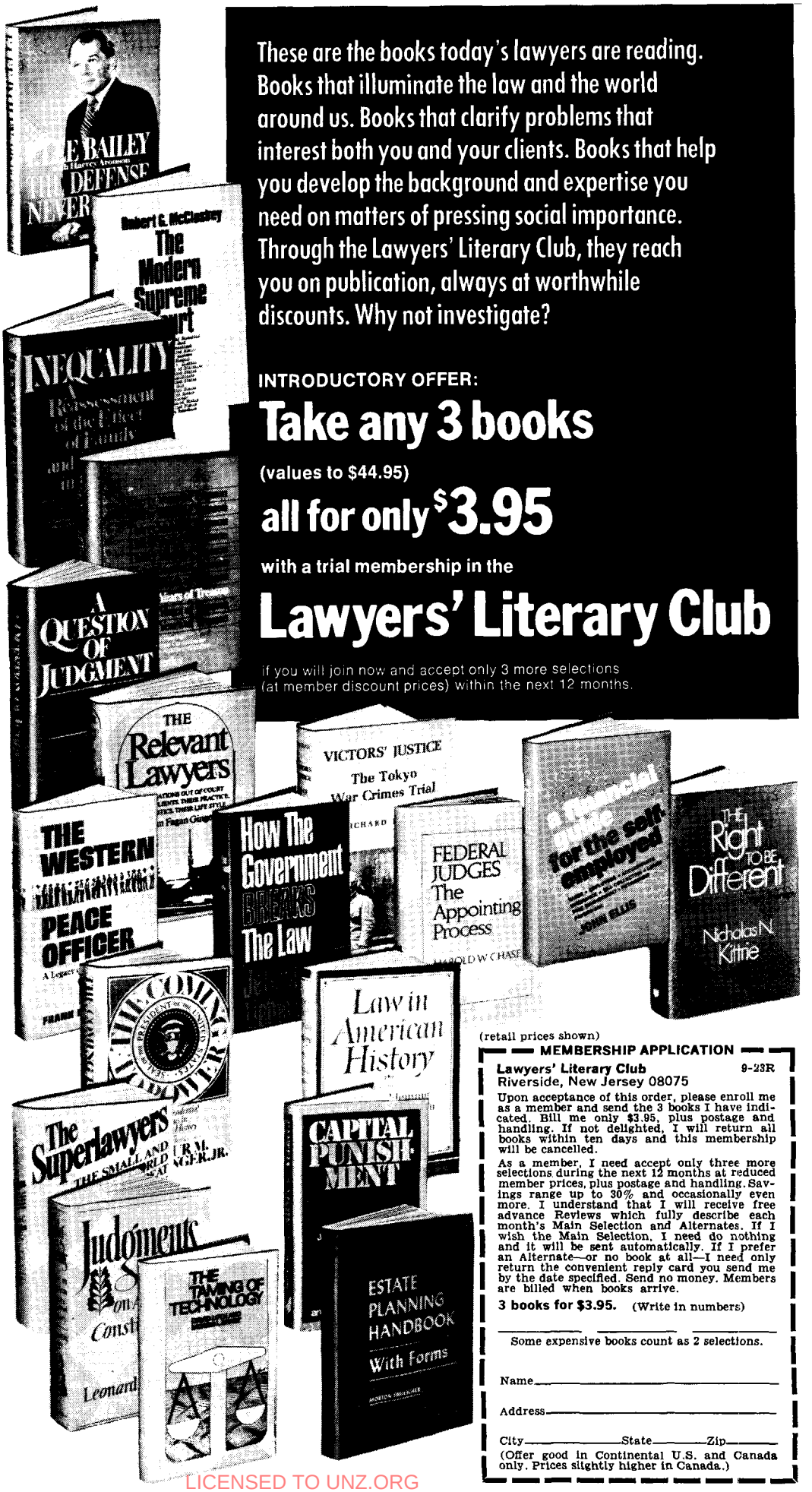

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ruled and the persons who ruled them?" He observed this revulsion in the destructive tactics of the anti-Weimar German intellectuals, in the captious dishonesty of those men and women of letters who mortgaged their minds to the Communist party in the 1930's, in the brittle snobbery of many of the postwar critics of "mass culture," and in the shrill utopianism of some of the colonial intellectuals who seemed to want only one thing more than national independence, and that was the failure of national independence.

At the same time, Shils was witness to (and participant in) what he later called the "civil politics" of intellectuals (as opposed to their "ideological politics"), notably in the formation of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* and in other efforts to bring under reasonable control some of the consequences of the new technology. Out of his own wartime service came his classic article with Morris Janowitz (not reprinted in this volume but I hope in a later one) on cohesion and disintegration in the *Wehrmacht* during World War II.

The power and richness of Shils's study of intellectuals arises not out of any grand theory he proposes but in the care with which the intellectual tradition is placed in a long historical perspective and viewed across many cultural boundaries, as well as in the ambivalence of the author's judgments. Intellectuals are indispensable to any society, and the more complex the latter the more important the former. But they are also enemies of any society, and especially of one in which a large fraction of the population consumes intellectual products. Nowhere is this contradiction more apparent than in the fact, recently noted by Seymour Martin Lipset, that the most productive intellectuals and those who have most frequently given their services to the regime are those most critical of the regime and most likely (especially when speaking outside their own intellectual specialties) to denounce and deride it.

Shils fears the demagogue. His most influential work, *The Torment of Secrecy*, was a lucid but anguished explanation of and protest against the populism of Joseph McCarthy. The Wisconsin demagogue exploited the latent fear of secrecy, the dislike of politicians, and the hostility to law that from time to time erupt to challenge legitimate authority, especially that form of authority based on democratic procedures. (Kings and autocrats may be assassinated but they are rarely ridiculed; the electors of the people, by contrast, are frequently ridiculed and sometimes murdered.) Legitimate authority in contemporary society depends, in ways Weber did not foresee, on incessant flattery of the citizens and self-abnegation by the office-holder. It is taken to be a mark of sincerity to despise the authority one wields and to denounce the regime one serves. What a reprehensible Senator began is now the stock-in-trade of those intellectuals who he once thought were his enemies.

The tension in the intellectual role arises, Shils argues, from the difficulty of reconciling the sacred and the civil. Intellectuals are the inheritors of a religious tradition having priestly, theological, and chiliastic components, which has been converted into a secular tradition having technical, philosophical, and revolutionary elements. All that has been lost in the transformation is the capacity for coherent belief. From time to time a great purpose—such as winning the war against Hitler—unites intellectuals and integrates them into society as a whole, but no such purpose has existed for over twenty-five years, and thus an entire generation of intellectuals has arisen who have felt free to compare the imperfections of society unfavorably with various conceptions of the ideal state while at the same time struggling to win place and power in the regime they despise.

WHAT Shils explains on sociological and historical grounds Leo Strauss, his former colleague at Chicago, would explain on philosophical ones. The intellectual can neither manage his own conflicts nor enter into a proper rela-

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tionship with the regime because he has lost, or wrongly denied, the capacity for philosophical thought. Intellectuals are not simply alienated from the regime, they are alienated from the possibility of moral reason. They have become positivists, which is to say moral relativists, and thus they must choose either between serving the technocracy with little regard for the ends it seeks or serving themselves by concocting ideologies, theories, and slogans whose first premises are rarely stated seriously because the intellectual does not believe that anything serious can be said about first principles. Their formulations are defective, not because they are chiliastic or unrealistic, but because they are arbitrary and without foundation.

SHILS does not address these issues, but of course he is aware of them. Though he writes of intellectuals, whose natural discourse one would suppose is that of philosophy, he describes them as if their proper realm were that of prudence. He objects to ideological politics because of its obsessive concern for totality, animosity, and separatism, and its impractical and self-destructive tendencies. But he does not object—or does not write as if he objected—to any particular ideology *because it is wrong*. In opposition to ideological politics he describes "civil politics," by which he does not mean politics carried on with good manners, but politics as carried on by prudent men willing to accept responsibility for the consequences of their own actions, men who are aware of the difficulty of reconciling moral imperatives:

> Civil politics requires an understanding of the complexity of virtue, that no virtue stands alone, that every virtuous act costs something in terms of other virtuous acts, that virtues are intertwined with evils, and that no theoretical system of a hierarchy of virtues is ever realizable in practice.

Some might rejoin, perhaps Professor Strauss among them, that the problem with intellectuals is not their tendency to impose "a theoretical system of a hierarchy of virtues" but the fact that they have no such hierarchy, and indeed have no virtues to profess but only sentiments to express. Surely a country that has watched some of its most prominent (it is hard to say "best") minds switch abruptly from Marxism to anti-Communism, from isolationism to internationalism and back to isolationism, from despising the masses to romanticizing them, from espousing equality of opportunity to preferring equality of condition, would be hard-pressed to state exactly what consistent theoretical scheme underlies the apparent confusion. To say that what has been at work here is the excessive operation of abstract principle may be to mistake style for substance.

THE intellectual may be especially mischievous today, not because he is unable to decide whether to dream or to scheme, but because there is no religious or philosophical tradition (except the tradition of skepticism moderated by benevolence) of which he feels a party. Since he relates to society chiefly through the nexus of complex ideas (rather than, as with most people, through the nexus of either simple ideas or personal benefits), the absence of ideas of (to him) compelling truth destroys or makes episodic that relationship. When Thomas Jefferson wrote (and believed!) that there were "self-evident" truths having to do with men being "endowed by their Creator" with "unalienable rights," no one thought it necessary to complain of the practice of "ideological politics." Indeed, it is possible to argue that it was precisely during a period when there existed widely-accepted moral beliefs about the legitimacy of the regime and of the rights and duties of men in it that ideological politics, though not intemperate politics, was absent.

Shils might agree. We all might agree, for there is a general tendency among men not blinded by rage or dazzled by utopias to adopt a Burkean stance: to defend certain principles, but to agree that principles alone cannot determine politics, and to resist the effort to state or apply those principles as if they could. The position of Burke is a comfortable one—not because it provides a convenient defense against change (Burke scarcely opposed that, even when it involved a colonial revolt), but because it leads one to base political arguments on temperament, experience, and history rather than on philosophical analysis. For most of us, that is all anyone has a right to expect, and most of the time that is all that is necessary. But on occasion, it becomes important to take issue with the substance, rather than the form, of intellectual conduct, to evaluate the institutional influence and not merely the social role of intellectuals, and to decide whether the less attractive features of intellectual involvement in politics are the result of such persons having too many ideas, too few ideas, or wrong ideas.

Liberalism of the Catacombs

AUGUST 1914. By ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN. Translated by Michael Glenny. *Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 622 pp. $10.00.*

THE NOBEL LECTURE ON LITERATURE. By ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN. Translated by Thomas P. Whitney. *Harper & Row. 38 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by ROBERT CONQUEST

SINCE *August 1914* is only part of a larger work, and so perhaps not susceptible of ready judgment, it may be more important to consider first what Solzhenitsyn feels himself to be doing. He has recently been on record as to his intentions in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech. First of all, he says of literature that it is "the living memory of a nation" preserved from one generation to another. "It nurses and preserves the nation's lost history in a form which is not susceptible of distortion and slander."

ROBERT CONQUEST's *works on Soviet affairs include* The Great Terror, Russia after Khrushchev, *and* Power and Policy in the USSR.

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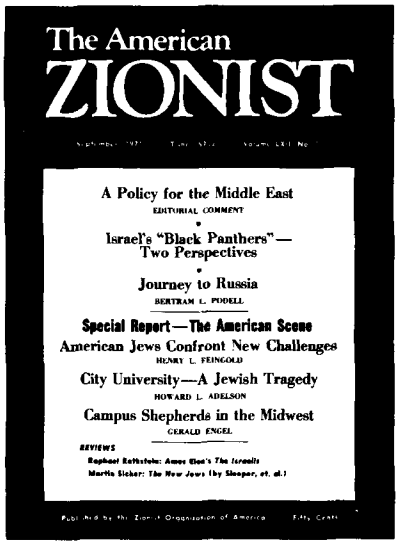

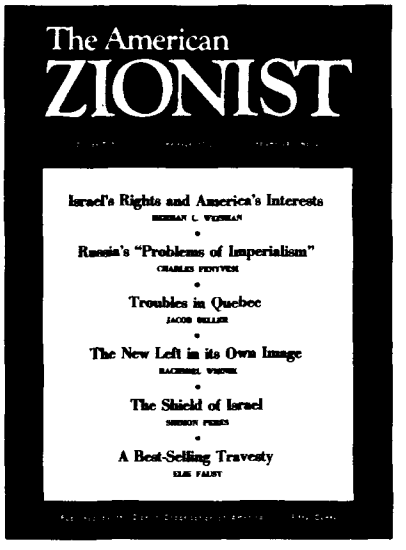

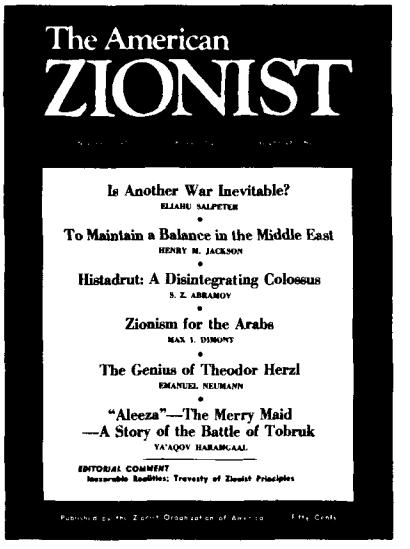

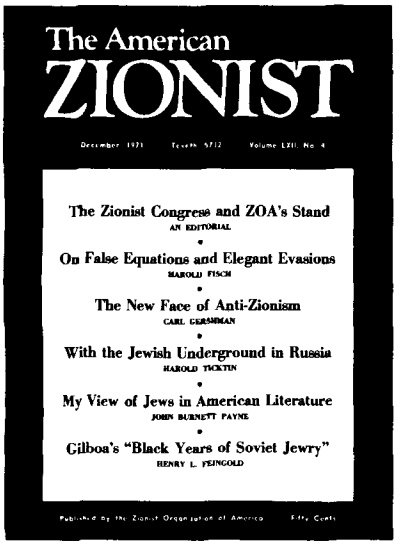

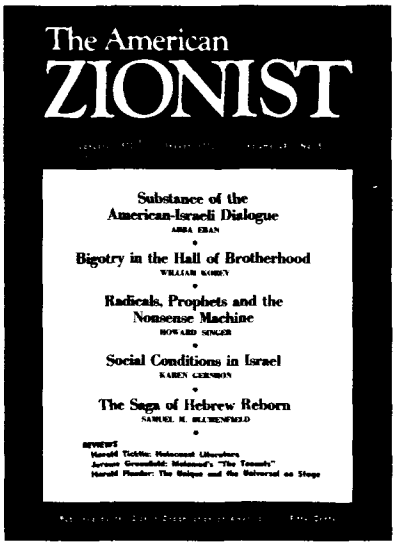

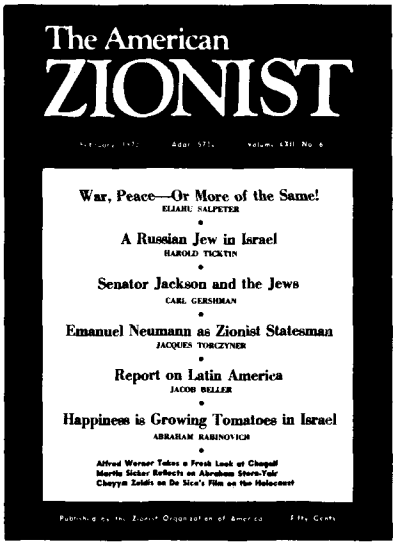

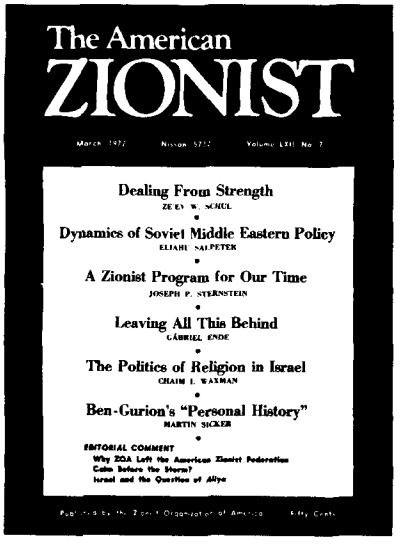

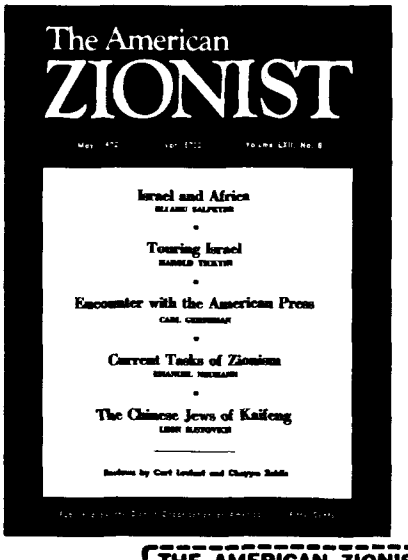

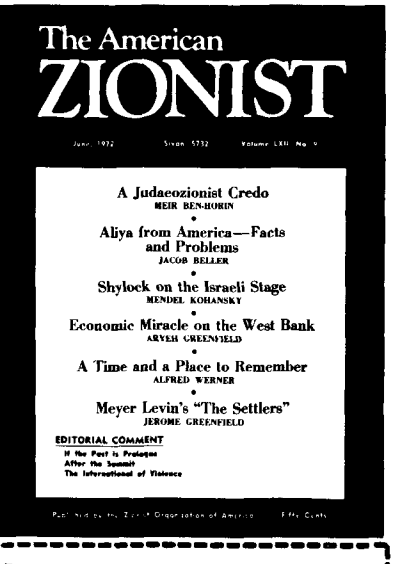

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And it is true that with all the extravagant falsification of history which has marked the Soviet period, past literature has not been rewritten to any significant extent: *War and Peace* has remained untouched. More broadly, Solzhenitsyn seems to imply, a nation's literature constitutes, particularly in an autocratic state, an alternative set of principles. And it seems quite clear that if any single factor can be given the credit for preventing the total and irrevocable Stalinization of Russia, it is the voices of the liberal Turgenev, the religious Dostoevsky, and the anarchist Tolstoy, which were never totally suppressed.

So much for Solzhenitsyn's aims with regard to his own countrymen. But he recognizes a task of yet wider scope. In the modern age, he argues in the Nobel speech, "world literature can transmit the concentrated experience of one land to another in such a way that we shall stop seeing double . . . that the different scales of values shall coincide." In fact, he sees his work and all great literature as being essentially a powerful weapon against ignorance both at home and in the other countries and cultures of the world. He is frank, even blunt, about the sort of ignorance, the sort of double standard, he means to combat in the West—as when he writes (the translation is my own):

> What, according to one scale, appears from afar as enviable, flourishing freedom, according to another scale, near at hand, is perceived as vexatious constraint, calling for the overturning of buses. What, in one area, could only be dreamed of as unattainable prosperity, in another area gives rise to indignation and is considered extreme exploitation demanding an immediate strike.

Again, it is quite clear what he is talking about when he writes:

> There are different scales for punishment and for crime. According to one scale, a month's imprisonment, or banishment to the country, or to a so-called "punishment cell," where they feed you white bread, rolls, and milk, shocks the imagination and fills the columns of the newspapers with anger. According to another scale, people find acceptable and forgivable prison terms of twenty-five years, dungeons where there is ice on the wall but where they strip you to your underwear, lunatic asylums for the sane, and the shooting on the frontier of countless people who won't see reason and who keep running away, one doesn't know where or why.

Any serious observer of the Western press, particularly the "liberal" press, must have noted that while it affects to base its judgments of foreign countries not so much on openly political criteria as on standards of humaneness, in fact what often happens is a competition in atrocity propaganda. It is not the extent of human suffering in a given state which counts so much as what its and its opponents' publicity machines can make of it. In *The First Circle* Solzhenitsyn gave us an example in a comparison of Russian and Greek prisons; the remarks quoted above generalize all this. (He complains as well of "the venal prejudice" of most members of the United Nations, who guard the liberty of some people and not that of others.)

He sees a comparable form of dangerous and unethical ignorance among the Western "young": "Young people, at an age when the only experience they have is sexual, at an age when they have no years of personal suffering to draw on, young people are enthusiastically repeating the discredited platitudes of our Russian 19th century, and they think they have come up with something novel." But he also notes their admirers among the old: "They try to ingratiate themselves with the young —anything so as not to look 'conservative.' And this is yet another Russian phenomenon of 19th-century origin: Dostoevsky called it 'being in bondage to advanced notions.' " The writer too may be infected: "If his young compatriots blithely proclaim depravity's superiority to modest toil, if they succumb to drugs or seize hostages, then the stench of it mingles with the writer's breath."

Solzhenitsyn refers, in particular, to the cult of revolutionary violence. His objection to it is not simply to the "superficiality," as he puts it, of the ideas of some of the Western young who feel all they need to do is to throw out their current rulers, " 'and the next lot—that's us!—we'll be just and understanding once we've laid aside our bombs and guns.' But of course they won't." More importantly, he notes that while at the beginning violence "acts openly and is even proud of itself," once established, it "cannot survive in isolation: it is inevitably bound up with the lie . . . anyone who has once proclaimed that violence is his method is inevitably forced to choose the lie as his principle."

Solzhenitsyn's view is that if truth were substituted for glib formulas, if minor local grievances were seen against the actual condition of the rest of humankind and the actual workings of other social systems, then all would be well. The province of literature is not to argue but to convey these realities, to bridge the abysses of falsehood and ignorance: in fact, to carry the truth. This is, indeed, a literary aim often spoken of, but Solzhenitsyn gives it a special scope.

In all this, of course, Solzhenitsyn invites the comparison, often made, with Tolstoy. But Solzhenitsyn's view of history is different, and consciously so. Indeed, in *August 1914* his General Blayoveshchensky is shown as coming to grief through an acceptance of Tolstoy's notion of Kutuzov, that a historical mystique is more powerful than the wills of individuals, so that the true leader, in war as in peace, need only relax and let events take their course, need only fit himself into the grain of a historical pattern. Against this (and contrary, too, to the mystical strain in *Dr. Zhivago*), Solzhenitsyn strongly asserts the view that history is to a considerable extent the province of accident, and of the wills of individuals applied at crucial points. As against Tolstoy, indeed, Solzhenitsyn has had the experience of the past half-century. Where Tolstoy's Man of

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Will (Napoleon) is defeated precisely because he is in conflict with natural trends, Solzhenitsyn's Lenin and Stalin were able to impose their wills against those same trends.

There is another notable difference between Solzhenitsyn's work and *War and Peace*. Solzhenitsyn's War is far larger, his Peace minuscule. And this is reflected if not in an absence of, at least in a far lesser role for, women. The bulk of Solzhenitsyn's work, indeed, has this characteristic. *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* is set in a totally womanless environment. While this is not the case with *The Cancer Ward* or *The First Circle,* let alone with *Matryona's Home,* in the first two at least, although the woman's role is touching, sensitive, and generally necessary, it is still a largely subordinate one, especially compared with such figures as Tolstoy's Natasha. So it is in history, or history's main events—particularly its central concentrations of war and revolution—which are Solzhenitsyn's focus. For, even more than in *War and Peace,* the hero of *August 1914* is history itself, or, more specifically, Russia, the Russia of this century expressed in, including, and subsuming the individuals of the narrative.

August 1914 seems above all intended to demonstrate the potentialities, the virtues—and the weaknesses—of a people seen on the eve of its descent into the wilderness. We find in it—and this seems essential to Solzhenitsyn's position, as it is to the position of all humanism in Russia—both the new Western liberal element and the old traditional Christian element of Russia facing their crisis before a truly successful amalgam had been attained. Both elements, as Solzhenitsyn has frequently demonstrated elsewhere, were to be crushed by the Communist regime, whose harsh and shallow ethos was a compound of a different kind, formed from the archaic brutality of Russia and the narrow intellectual-terrorist tradition of the West.

On a larger scale, what may be seen in the whole of Solzhenitsyn's work, concentrated out of the experience of millions of his com-

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is an entirely new phe-
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period, modern humanist ideas which had already emerged in a national literature and an intelligentsia, have been crushed and repudiated. The difference in tone between Solzhenitsyn's attitudes and our own is not so much one of essence as a matter of the experience which he and his have faced and we and ours have not. On the one hand, he is harder, more hammered and tempered, than the writers of the West; on the other, his liberalism has been purged of illusion—the comfortable fat has been sweated off.

August 1914 is, as we have noted, part of a trilogy and cannot yet be judged as a whole. Meanwhile, judgments on it in the West have been varied. In the end this seems to boil down to a matter of the predilections of critics. The taste for the great set-piece novel has rather gone out in many Western circles. Most objections to the book are in effect that it is not "psychological" in the sense that its highly individual individuals are still seen as part of a great sweep of public events; and its "intellectuals" are not shown as being outside, superior to, and beneficially influencing those events.

It may be argued that the modern Western literary sensibility has narrowed the traditional scope of literature. In the old days, history, philosophy, biography, were as highly regarded as, and often more highly regarded than, the novel, but now for some reason the novel is rated as specifically "creative" in a sense which reduces the others to the second rank. From this it appears to follow that the novel which is itself part history is of a lower or less interesting type. This is illogical, but literary tastes and fashions are not matters of logic. In my view, we are likely to find in the long run that Solzhenitsyn's work will mark a change from the extremes of subjectivity and obliquity into which much of our literature has been directed at the expense of the larger scope of the strong mind and the deep heart.

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Reviewed by JOHN HOLLANDER

THE RECENT rise of the picture-book has paradoxically come about as a result of the decline of book illustration in the past half century. But whether specifically confined to juvenile publishing or to the peripheries of seriousness traced by "non-books," "art books" (as opposed, of course, to art-historical scholarship), "coffee-table books," or whatever, the illustrated text has on the whole remained in the realm of childish things. In the 19th century, novels had both pictures and conversations; the secondariness, if not the unseriousness, of books with pictures began to emerge amid a cluster of cultural facts, connected by ways which Marshall McLuhan, Walter Benjamin, and Harold Rosenberg, for example, might variously chart: the spread of still and motion photography, the triumph of Parisian art over academic and illustrative traditions, dogmas of literary modernism about pure and unpropped texts, and so forth.

Central among these, however, would have to be the replacement of wood-engraving, which had served not only book and magazine illustration but the reproduction of painting as well, by modern, "half-tone" processes (by the middle 1850's, it began to be possible to make photographic prints on the ends of wood-blocks, which could then be cut without need for a drawn design). From the time of Bewick's discovery of the uses of the wooden block in engraving in 1722, through the end of the 19th century, this process remained the principal means for the dissemination of printed pictures. Its re-

JOHN HOLLANDER's *most recent book of verse is* Town and Country Matters, *published last month by David R. Godine.*

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placement by photomechanical processes, Aldous Huxley once pointed out, put thousands of competent and uninventive engravers out of work and cruelly saddled them with the burden of originality—they all had to become *artists*—for the translation of pictures into prints was to be accomplished without need of their skills. Even more important, perhaps, was the increased expense of the newer technology—the "half-tone" which demanded heavy, coated paper stock, etc. Illustrations of novels lingered for a while in the frontispiece, and then, after World War I, bowed out completely save in children's books.

The peculiar pictorial qualities of wood-engraving—adaptable as the process was to so many idioms—took on during the decades following its decline a predictable sequence of auras, evoking by turns the Old Fashioned, the Sentimental, the Grotesque, the Ludicrous. Max Ernst discovered during the 20's that one of the best ways to make pictures look like bad dreams was by cutting and pasting up bits of old engraved book and magazine illustrations. The frightening metamorphoses which resulted depended upon the viewer's initial faith in the graphic vocabulary and idioms of the wood-engraving language itself—no nasty or dirty or illogical or truly scary picture could ever appear garbed in such proper uniform.

ERNST could see the black-and-white, the false grays, of wood-engraving as the visual fabric of nightmare. But in our own day, a major graphic artist has been maintaining a deep romantic understanding with Victorian illustration for nearly twenty years. Edward Gorey is no mere pasticheur, and yet most of his work is trivially or deeply parodic. His pseudo-Victorian fictions and verses provide materials to illustrate in pseudo-Victorian ways, and yet his originality is profound. Gorey's concerns began to appear in his illustrated covers for Anchor Book editions of Henry James novels in the early 50's, but even before then, his first illustrated book, *The Unstrung Harp*, had appeared. Its protagonist was Mr Earbrass, an Edwardian novelist the conception and creation of whose most recent book was narrated and depicted with stern correctness of British contemporary idiom ("hind-side-to" for our "back-side-front," etc.) and visual detail. But the book's deep obsession with the agonies of creativity and the imagination's loneliness made it more than a brilliant exercise in those studied nostalgias that reach too far back in time to have been touched by one's own memory.

In the subsequent twenty years, Gorey has produced about thirty-five more books, with texts variously in prose and verse. His earlier volumes—such as the collection of limericks (*The Listing Attic);* the alphabetic horror verses of *The Fatal Lozenge* and *The Gashlycrumb Tinies* with its series of Disasters Befalling the Young; that marvelous pseudonymous formal parody, totally devoid of erotic content, of tatty

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British pornography of the Evelyn Waugh period, *The Curious Sofa* —have all been unobtainable for some time. Now some fifteen of them have been reprinted in a volume entitled *Amphigorey* (from "amphigouri," a Victorian mode of "nonsense" verse of highly-wrought form but with no apparent meaning). The title makes manifest Gorey's relation to the whole Victorian "nonsense" tradition—that mode of poetic romance which liberated, when they were dreaming up things for children, the otherwise blocked imaginations of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear. (Certainly Lear is Gorey's avowed predecessor.)

This whole collection is invaluable in giving us the heart of the Gorey canon, and in putting together enough of his work to allow his artistic stature and role properly to emerge. Although his genre of text-and-picture is not unlike that of the 19th-century German humorist Wilhelm Busch, his work is neither that popular nor that vulgar; Gorey writes and draws for the educated ear and eye. His *petit-guignol* horrors, born of an ingenuity attentive to the woes of children in Victorian *Kitsch,* all have as their unwritten epigraph Oscar Wilde's "One must have a heart of stone not to laugh at the death of Little Nell." His evocations of loneliness and moral desolation are quite genuine, and his little mock narratives parallel in their hidden layers the personal seriousness of Lear's Yonghy-Bonghy Bo, and Dong with the Luminous Nose. *The Remembered Visit,* here reprinted, is totally straightforward.

SOME OF Gorey's more abstract works, like *The West Wing* (unconnected glimpses into various rooms in a deserted west wing of some vast English country house) carry on a line which began with *The Object-Lesson,* a line that leads to Gorey's most recent book, *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* (the anagrams of his name become more frequent in his later work), a kind of do-it-yourself, early 20's detective-story kit, devoid of instructions for assembly, let alone plot, and consisting of images

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alone. *The Object-Lesson* itself is a most typical work. Its hilariously abstract and paradigmatic vignettes embody the cliches of some Wilkie Collins *manqué;* these glimpses consist of a page of picture together with its accompanying caption-line of narrative, with the continuity provided by syntax alone, as in some folded-paper writing game; the narrative dissolves into lyric evocation—despite the joking—because of the very lack of logical sequence. Thus: "On the shore a bat, or possibly an umbrella [turn] disengaged itself from the shrubbery [turn] causing those nearby to recollect the miseries of childhood"—which last accompanies one of the canonical Gorey visions: three dark, great-coated, muffled figures stare out across imponderable distances, in an emptied landscape; they seem to be related in some quasi-familial way.

Admirers of Gorey's work will like to hunt for obsessive themes and presences in his pictures: the little armless black figure to whom he devotes a dedicatory French limerick, an unconsumed bunch of grapes that continues to haunt every frame of *The Curious Sofa,* and so forth. They may also observe the sad necessities of reduced offset reproduction, which have coarsened the drawn, mock-engraved lines of many of the early books (*The Unstrung Harp* suffers particularly in this respect), but Gorey has redone the text, letterpress in the original edition, in the calligraphy used throughout the rest of his *oeuvre.* A second collected Gorey volume, including such central works as *The Gilded Bat* (about a ballet dancer), *The Blue Aspic,* and one of my own favorites, *The Deranged Cousins,* will, when published, help to delineate even more clearly the boundaries of his imaginative domain.

A FINAL word about Gorey's verse, which derives from Lear, from antithetical and parodic nursery-rhyme traditions like Belloc's cautionary verses: "The aged Duchess of Athlone/ Remarked in her subacid tone,/ 'I doubt if he is what we need.' . . / So no Godolphin is the boy/ Who blacks the boots in the Savoy," etc. It is quite expert, and almost insanely attentive, like his prose, to historical idiom and vocabulary ("He presented it with a length of string"—*length,* not *piece,* etc.). It still seems to me to be at its best in the catalogued nastinesses of *The Fatal Lozenge,* viz., under *P:*

The Proctor buys a pupil ices,
And hopes the boy will not resist
When he attempts to practise vices
Few people even know exist.

He only fails in one way (and I find this rather touching): while his Anglicized spelling is as singularly correct in these verses as elsewhere (e.g., the period-less "Mr" of Mr Earbrass), Gorey's own Midwestern American ear claims its eminent domain at last; thus he rhymes *sherry-fairy, Herridge-marriage,* and *daring-herring,* which no Englishman, nor even a New Yorker, would do.

Gnosis Manifesto

WHERE THE WASTELAND ENDS: POLITICS AND TRANSCENDENCE IN POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY. By THEODORE ROSZAK. *Doubleday. 492 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by ALAN GOLDFEIN

WHEN Theodore Roszak wrote his popular *The Making of a Counter Culture* back in 1969, he may have been partial to Gestalt psychology, to guerrilla theater, to Zen; but there was yet an intentional effort to stand away, to keep at least his little finger on what we call "objectivity," to give all the pieces a historical coherence and identity ("counter culture"—implying, after all, that it bore a distinct relationship *to* the culture), and to "see

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them in the perspective of our times." To *understand.* Three years ago it was possible, Roszak thought, to consider understanding. But now

> We are in for an interlude during which an increasing number of people in urban-industrial society will take their bearings in life from I-Ching and the signs of the zodiac, from yoga and strange contemporary versions of shamanic tradition. . . . This is the great adventure of our age. . . . It is the reclamation and renewal of the Old Gnosis. . . . Then, perhaps, if the bomb holds off and the environment endures, we will be ready to make the transition to a truly post-industrial society.

Out-and-out advocacy. A Gnosis manifesto! Roszak takes on the exuberant anticipation of the young Marx of 1848 (whose rationalistic humanism he of course rejects), substituting the "apocatastatic" light of the mystic for the "haunting specter" of the working class, and the post-industrial world for Europe. Roszak's intention in *Where the Wasteland Ends* is no less than "the devolution of the scientific tradition." This he regards as "the most important cultural event of our generation": with Blake, "to cast off Bacon, Locke, and Newton," and build a "visionary commonwealth."

WHY the change from *The Making of a Counter Culture* to this new book? Roszak enumerates his reasons: "environmental collapse, world poverty, technocratic elitism, psychic alienation, the death of the soul." *Five* horsemen!—all brought to a rampage by the objective scientific tradition. Like the poets (Blake, Wordsworth, Goethe) whom he sycophantically reveres, clinging for rebirth to their every image, Roszak has set out to electrify—electrocute might be more accurate—his adversaries with ferocious shocks. He believes that he is a standard-bearer, that he now possesses "the higher sanity," that he has seen the magic that was in Wordsworth's visionary gleam. So he must take on all enemies—in all fields. Clearly, three years of the *Mother Earth News,* of Richard Alpert become cult-figure Baba Ram Das, of the Hare Krishna kids and the Jesus kids, of the ecological doomsday-sayers and the expostulators of the third-level of consciousness, have had their effect on Roszak. He has now taken sides, unequivocally, and become a true believer.

When Roszak is operating in the area of "the higher sanity" there is no point in arguing. What is one to do, after all, with the assertion that coffee drinking is linked historically to "single vision" (scientific sight), or the discovery of gravity to the religious feeling of fallenness? But Roszak also takes side on more specific and current questions. He states, for example, as part of his indictment of the post-modern industrial urban technological machine, that the urgent question of rural improvement in underdeveloped nations has been entirely overlooked. Yet there are many economists—and they are not the fringe freaks Roszak so fawns upon—who are working on just this problem. One must conclude that Roszak has hardly looked at the literature of underdevelopment, for, if he had, he would have found, with not much digging, the writings of Theodore Schultz and Clifford Geertz, to mention two of the most prominent.

Of course, both Schultz and Geertz are quite rational, objective, and "linear," hence deadly poison in Roszak's view. For these qualities, he asserts, are "reductionist." They reek from having worn too long "the filthy garments" of the scientific revolution. They "thingify" nature. They compartmentalize the world and then worship their own creations. Economists, to follow Roszak's reasoning (if the term can be used), could not possibly care about the quality of rural life, for to them nature is inconceivable except as exploitable land, a factor of production to be sucked up into the technological works.

Some of this logic is reminiscent of a pioneering and now classic book (to which Roszak does not allude) in the field of economic anthropology, by Karl Polanyi—*The Great Transformation* (1944). Polanyi argued that the scientific and industrial revolutions—in their passion above all *to objectify*—combined to reduce what were once man and nature into factors of production: labor and land. Polanyi's argument was a rational and humanistic one: that classical 19th-century laissez-faire liberalism was no longer viable, and that planning had become necessary. Roszak, of course, is against planning. He sees a National Economic Plan as technocratic politics, as being in restraint of freedom. Yet the final irony is this: that Polanyi had made a point of showing that those very primitive societies which Roszak and others so revere *did* have plans. "Laissez-faire was planned, planning was not," was the economic anthropologists' famous distinction.

IT WAS in his *Essay on Bentham and Coleridge* that J. S. Mill wrote, "Whoever could master the premises and combine the methods of both would possess the entire English philosophy of this age." Mill, in his later years, recognized the need for a softening of the hard-headed, utilitarian, hedonistic calculus which characterized early liberalism. A sensibility that one might call poetic was necessary too, a recognition of the irrational, incalculable heart of the human. Perhaps Mill himself came closer than anyone else to representing such a fusion, for it was he who championed the freedom of the individual, not naively, as a mechanistic automaton competing with other self-interested mechanisms, but as a man who stood *within* society.

Where Mill stepped between Bentham and Coleridge, Roszak, by contrast, disdains to mediate, for example, between B. F. Skinner and Allen Ginsberg. Even anti-behaviorism is beneath him, for it would mean conceding something, however small, to the Western intellectual and humanist tradition, which he sees as resting upon a de-sacramentalized "single (and dead) vision" of nature. Any alliance with this tradition must be spurned.

Reading *Where the Wasteland*

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What's happening to the WORLD? An open letter to readers of Commentary.

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Who are WORLD's editors? Hollis Alpert is Managing Editor. Horace Sutton is Editorial Director and also presides over the travel department. Roland Gelatt is International Editor based in London. Richard L. Tobin is Executive Editor and also writes the Communications Section. Midge Decter, formerly Executive Editor of Harper's, is our Literary Editor. Hallowell Bowser and Roger M. Williams are senior editors. Katharine Kuh provides regular coverage of the Fine Arts. Robert Craft, Stravinsky's longtime associate, writes on music. Margaret Weiss writes about photography. Most of us have worked together before with genuine affection and respect.

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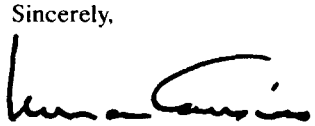

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Ends, one cannot help but be struck by the paradox of a man pushing hard with the prod of over-rationalized, reductionist, mechanized analysis at his enemies: excess rationalism, reductionism, mechanism. Roszak rails against the dehumanizing technocracy, but talks hopefully, like a character out of *Brave New World,* of Human Potentials Growth Centers and National Psychic Development Competitions. And he criticizes (rightly) those rigid repeaters of the ontologies of Marx or Comte or Darwin, but rigidly repeats the cosmologies of Blake, Wordsworth, and Goethe. Indeed, his own brand of exegesis turns out to be no different from the scientific (or *false-scientific*) reductionism he hates, with the scientific jargon (what he calls "the hocus pocus of social domination") merely replaced by another kind: "apocatastasis," "mind-scape," "symbolic resonance," "the old Gnosis." The more he uses words against the intellectual regime of words, the more he reasons against reason; the more he has enlisted reason, the more he has augmented it. For certainly, the Western intellectual tradition *is* his weapon, the one in which he has been trained, the one "organic" to the society in which he has decided to live.

What intellectual anti-intellectualism causes is a dogmatic kind of anti-dogmatism which burns The Old Answer at the stake while a few yards away on the other side of the town square it is busy building a pulpit to The New Answer. It fails to recognize precisely the doubt, the mistake, the human. It gives up in the face of tensions, in the midst of battles. It rushes off elsewhere to kneel before and embrace an invisible mystical absolutism, while the struggle of life goes on right here.

It is not insignificant that when Roszak lists his enemies, "the terrible systematizers," he names Bacon, Hobbes, Saint Simon, Comte, Bentham, Marx, Veblen, and Watson—and overlooks men like Mill and Robert Owen and the American pragmatists. Owen, for example, was at once a systematizer, a rationalist, an early industrialist-entrepreneur, and yet had vision: of a society of small communities where gardens grew around the mills and where people cared for one another. And Owen's influence went beyond the utopian worlds of New Harmony and New Lanark, spreading to the early reform movement that helped temper the cruelest edges of early capitalism.

It is from the active tradition of men like Mill and Owen and John Dewey, rather than from Buddha, that real improvements are likely to come. In fact, much of the doomsday fear of technology has been the result of technologically-originated and transmitted publicity about the problem. One hears often of revolutions of rising expectations as cause for political turbulence. Is it not reasonable to suggest that those same rising expectations operate in the scientific world as well, and that apocalyptic trembling is as much a sign of betterment as a consequence of decay? Roszak calls his answer "The Politics of Eternity." In fact it represents the politics of cultural despair.

Odyssey of a Jew

SOMEWHERE ELSE. By ROBERT KOTLOWITZ. *Charterhouse. 373 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID STERN

ROBERT KOTLOWITZ's first novel tells a story which in its every aspect is commonplace. The description of Lomza, the Polish *shtetl* at the turn of the century where the novel begins and to which its title alludes, is commonplace; and Mendel's journey from Lomza to London, the odyssey of a young Jew in search of a larger, more cosmopolitan, and hospitable society, is equally commonplace. But Kotlowitz, through his aesthetic distance from the material and a rare mastery of the novelist's craft, transforms common facts and events into a novel uncommon both for its elegance and for its honesty.

The extent of Kotlowitz's achievement is all the more remarkable in light of other recent attempts to evoke Jewish life in Eastern Europe before the Holocaust and the near-universal failure of such attempts to come to terms with *shtetl* life in its essence. More than any other force, the *shtetl* created and determined the modality of all subsequent Jewish culture in the Diaspora. Significantly, however, efforts to capture it in fiction have either tended to emphasize the grotesque and the demonic side of its religious life, as in the novels of I. B. Singer, or have succumbed to a pervasive sentimentalism marked all too often by ignorance and unimaginativeness.

By contrast, Kotlowitz strikingly succeeds in recreating *shtetl* life precisely because, in his utterly unsentimental way, he takes the *shtetl* for what it was—neither the best nor the worst of all possible worlds. The first third of *Somewhere Else,* devoted to a history of Mendel's family through three generations, is a saga of deterioration which begins with Napoleon's army marching through Lomza's marketplace and offering its bewildered inhabitants their first glimpse of Western enlightenment, hence of their own insularity and provincialism. But Lomza, and its innumerable counterparts throughout the Pale of Jewish settlement, ignored the message. Like Eliezer, Mendel's great-grandfather, who in his own youth was briefly but ineffectually stirred to follow the French army and who, at the advanced age of one hundred and four, burns to death one cold Friday night as he studies a compendium of Jewish law, the *shtetl* committed history's most unforgivable sin: it lived too long.

Yet even at the height of its development, when the *shtetl* provided a spawning-ground of talent for the celebrated *yeshivot* of Lithuania and, in Poland, for the Hasidic movement, its culture as a whole best expressed not the Jew's prodigality of faith—as many a sentimentalist would have it—but his unlimited powers of persistence. The *shtetl* proved so durable an institution because its

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DAVID STERN, reviewed My Name Is Asher Lev *by Chaim Potok in our October 1972 number.*

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social forms—like the traditional Jewish law whose observance and rituals pervaded and molded every aspect of daily routine—were geared primarily not to the saint or the scholar (though these remained the ideals to which every Jew aspired) but to the average Jew, neither sinner nor saint, who was too occupied with the question of his survival in this world to devote much time to problems concerned with the next.

Like the greatest characters of Yiddish literature, among whom Sholem Aleichem's Tevye is only the most obvious example, Mendel is exactly this sort of "average" Jew—the *beinoni* who on the Day of Judgment in the next world, and as well in this one, hangs forever between redemption and doom. Never very successful, nor terribly unsuccessful, Mendel neither suffers catastrophic tragedy nor succumbs to overwhelming despair. Gifted with a promising musical voice, he is first sent off to Warsaw to study the cantorial arts, but, homesick and bewildered, he flees back to Lomza after confessing to the principal that he no longer believes in God. A year later he leaves home again, this time for London, the classic innocent eager to be initiated into the mysteries and temptations of modern culture. As England slips into World War I, Mendel's life also begins to fall apart. In quick succession he loses first his position as cantor at a small synagogue; his job as a messenger for his uncle's diamond business; his cousin and best friend who goes off to America; and on the very night that King George declares war, his virginity to an archetypical Gentile girl. For a short time, Mendel tries his luck singing at upper-class after-dinner parties, but finally follows the common sense which unerringly informs him that it is time to move on again. He enlists in the Jewish Legion and marches off, "very nervous," to Palestine.

But no matter how far Mendel journeys from Lomza, he never manages to escape the *shtetl* and the sense of his past. His odyssey through Europe and London is, in fact, only a search for another Lomza, a new community to replace the one he has lost: Gentile or Jewish, he thinks it makes little difference. But Mendel remains too much the Polish Jew, too poor and too foreign in his accent and manners, ever to become a proper *Englisher,* while at the same time, having left behind in Lomza his formal commitment to religious law, he will never again be Jewish enough for the Jews. Though he leaves Lomza determined, in a different place and at a different time, to become a different man, no matter how many times he changes his name —finally to Maurice Moritz (its own double!)—he never succeeds in changing himself.

What follows is the old comedy of assimilation: the more the Jew attempts to adapt, the more he reveals his Jewishness. It is Dorothy Sullivan, the Gentile girl who seduces Mendel and from whom Mendel has hidden his ancestry, who tells him she has known all along that he is a Hebrew—as if "he had just crawled out of the wilderness after forty years." Mendel, in fact, only plays at assimilation because assimilation itself is only play. Since he knows that he can never actually go the last step and commit apostasy, his movement between past and present, between Lomza and London, resembles less a dialectic than a limbo, and one which toward the end of the novel takes place increasingly inside his own head. Only when Mendel comes to accept his inability, and his unwillingness, to change himself, does he also begin to apprehend the final irony of his odyssey: there *is* no essential difference between life in Lomza and life in London.

Mendel's acknowledgment of what he calls his "unseriousness" is itself, however, a reaffirmation of the Jew's unique ability to persist, his unwillingness to change himself in favor of the shifting tides of history. In the course of the narrative, this reaffirmation coincides significantly with Mendel's own rejection of Marxism, just then emerging as the fashionable ideology for assimilated young Jews, among whom are many of Mendel's friends. Observing their "seriousness," and their mounting obsession with revolution, Mendel recalls the death of his own father, the Rabbi of Lomza, a man so righteous that having become obsessed with the idea of justice and "the dim possibility at last of making his way to saint-hood," he literally burns himself up. At book's end, when his Communist friends violently disrupt a Zionist meeting which Mendel has attended out of curiosity, he finally understands what all such ideologies and their solutions add up to for Jews: "A dirty business. Jewish bullies bullying Jews. . . . Like Polish hoodlums on the streets of Lomza after dark. . . . They didn't have the slightest idea of how the world should go."

"What else is there to say about these Polish Jews?" Kotlowitz asks early in *Somewhere Else*:

> They thought they would go on forever in their small town. . . . They plunged arrow-straight for destiny, and rushed toward the future as though it were their due. They believed that the earth belonged to them—or enough of it for happiness—and went about their business as though they were ordinary people.

The irony of this passage, an irony which shrouds the entire novel, lies in its total ellipsis of the Holocaust. It would have been impossible for these ordinary Jews to anticipate the one experience designed to teach them forever that they were *not* ordinary. For the *shtetl,* no matter how far advanced in its own dissolution, was destroyed not by the forces of modernity in whose name Mendel and his generation abandoned it, but by a resurgence of barbarism. And yet, given the assumptions which governed Mendel's odyssey from Eastern Europe to the West, the very writing and publication of a book like Kotlowitz's would have seemed an equally unforeseeable, not to say unlikely, event. As a triumphant acknowledgment of the sublime ordinariness and persistence of Jewish life, *Somewhere Else* is nothing less than its author's celebration of his own, and our, roots.

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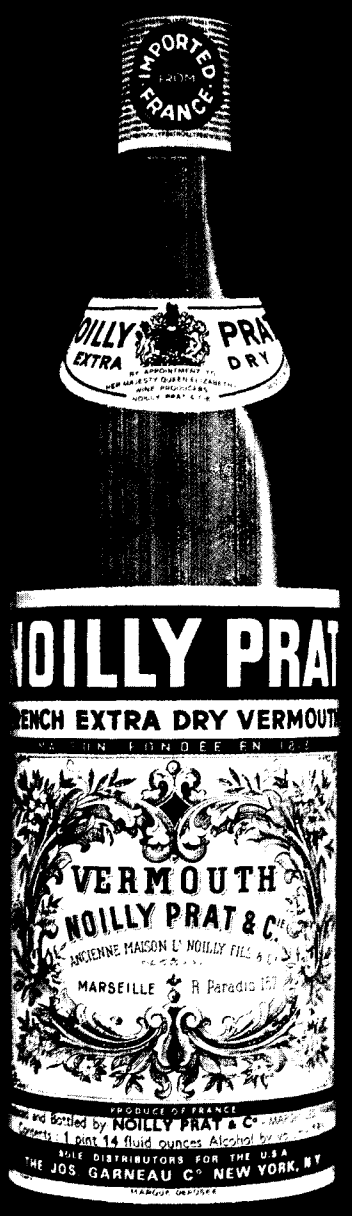

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